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TIME:

A

MONTHLY MISCELLANY OF INTERESTING

AND

AMUSING LITERATURE.

"Would'st thou hear the melodies of Time?—Listen!"—THOMAS HOOD.

VOLUME IX.

LONDON:
KELLY & CO.,
51, GREAT QUEEN STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, W.C.
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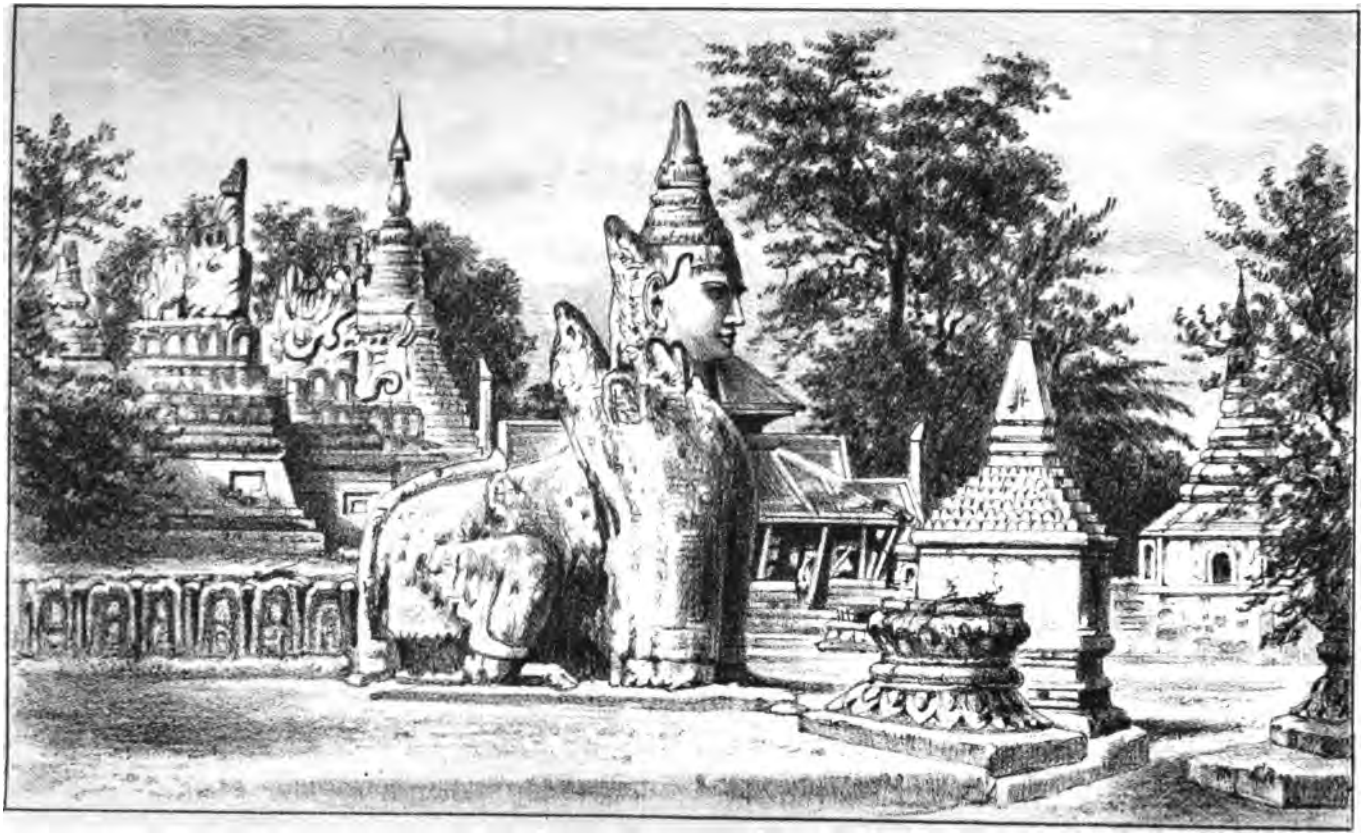

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TIME.

JULY, 1883.

BURMAH AND THE BURMESE.

ALTHO' Arrakan and the Tenasserim Provinces have been in our possession since 1826, and Pegu since 1853, very little is known of the country or its people. The two former provinces were in a very backward state indeed until they were amalgamated with Pegu, and administered by Sir Arthur Phayre, since which British Burmah has become one of the best governed and most flourishing of our provinces in the East. Its natural advantages are great; it is intersected by numerous rivers, such as the Irrawadi, Salwen, Yonzaleen, Sittang, Ghine, Attaran and others. It has an extensive sea coast and four principal ports, Rangoon, Moulmein, Bassein and Akyab. Although its principal exports are teak and rice, it is very rich in minerals; and notwithstanding gold fields have not been discovered as yet, gold there must be, for it is found in the beds of nearly all the streams. Small nuggets have been found in the Sho-ay-ghein river. Copper combined with antimony, iron and sulphur are found in the islands of Mergui Archipelago and also on the banks of the Attaran. Lead is plentiful in Upper Burmah, iron is common everywhere. Tin is abundant in the Tenasserim Provinces, manganese, arsenic and coal are also found near Mergui. Limestone is plentiful near Moulmein and up the Salwen and also in Upper Burmah, but is scarce elsewhere. In botany the province is exceeding rich, and has long been famous for its durable timbers, orchids, wild flowers and flowering shrubs.

Its fauna is most varied and extensive, and its rivers abound with the most delicious fish. Oysters are numerous and Diamond Island has long been famous for its turtle. The wild tea plant has been discovered in Karennee, and the cultivation of that plant will doubtless be as great an industry at some future date as it is now in Assam. For in Burmah the extremes of cold and heat are

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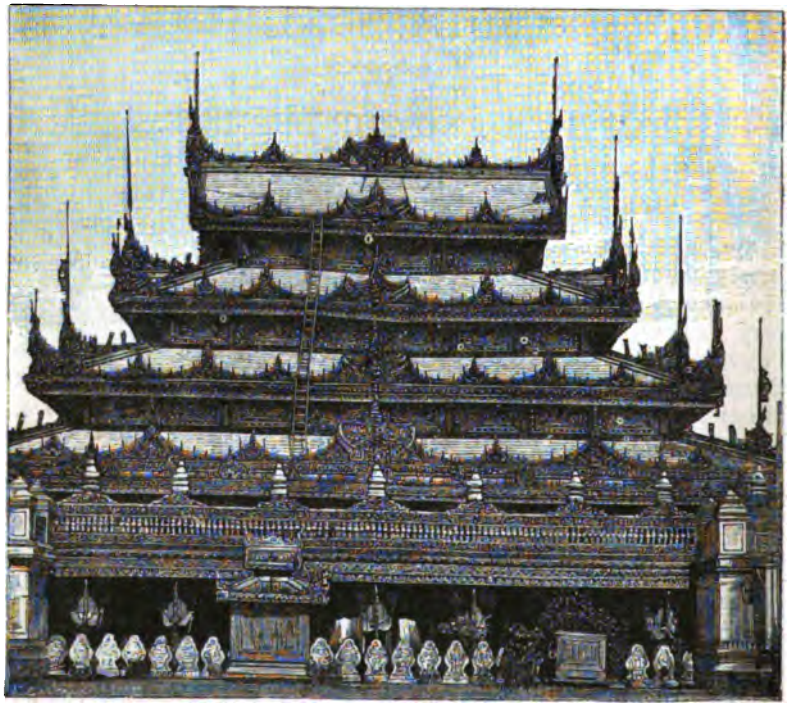
unknown, there are no hot winds, yet that tropical humidity so necessary to the development of leaf is characteristic of the province—the work would just suit the people—it is not too severe and they are noted for forming their own Towngyas or hill-side clearances. Burmese and Karens are easily led, have no caste and will readily settle down on an estate, where they could get regular work and pay, and be kindly treated. The Burmese are of Tartar origin and have the same high cheek bones, the broad faces, the flat noses and the slanting eyes peculiar to the Mongols.



PHOONGIE HOUSE OR MONASTERY AT UMRAPOORAH, UPPER BURMAH.
Formerly the Capital, but deserted in 1858 for Mandalay, the present chief town of Upper Burmah.

In character the Burman is a paradox, a mixture of all that is good and bad. His religion, as originally framed by its founders, is, after Christianity, probably the purest and most suited to Eastern nations. Dr. Mason, who disliked if he did not hate the Bhuddists, says, "Three hundred years before Alexandria was founded, about the time that Thales, the most ancient philosopher of Europe, was teaching in Greece that water is the origin of all things, the soul of the world, and Zoroaster in Media or Persia was systematizing the fire worship of the Magi, and Confucious

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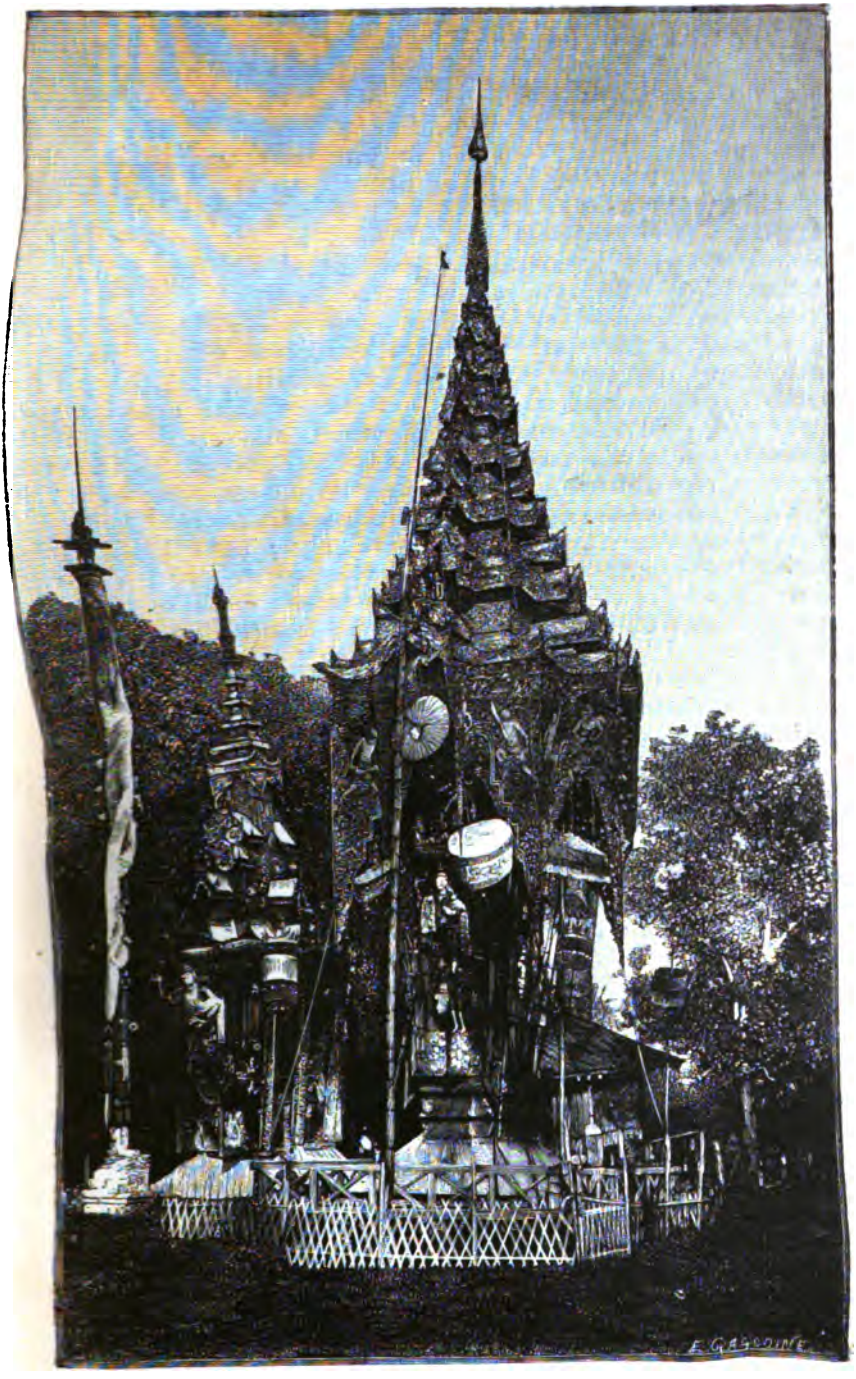

POONGHEZH BYAN, OR FUNERAL PYRE OF A HIGH PRIEST.

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in China was calling on the teeming multitudes around him to offer to guardian spirits and the manes of their ancestors, and Nebuchadnezzar was setting up his golden image in the plains of Dura, and Daniel was labouring in Babylon to establish the worship of the true God in Judæa, a reverend sage, with his staff and scrip, who had left a throne for philosophy, was travelling from Gaya to Benares, and from Benares to Kanouj, exhorting the people against theft, falsehood, adultery, killing and intemperance. Nor did he confine his instructions to external vices. Pride, anger, lust, envy and covetousness were condemned by him in as strong terms as are ever heard from the Christian pulpit. Love, mercy, patience, self denial, alms-giving, truth and the cultivation of wisdom, he required of all. Good actions, good words and good thoughts were the frequent subjects of his sermons; and he was unceasing in his cautions to keep the mind free from the turmoils of passion and the cares of life." This sage, who founded the doctrines of Bhuddism, lived and began his ministrations nearly twenty-four centuries ago; and his disciples moving to the south-east are supposed to have erected the great Shoay Dagon Pagoda in Rangoon in the second half of the sixth century before Christ, or shortly after the foundations of Rome were laid!

The ministers of this religion at the present day in Burmah are called Poonghees. They shave their heads and dress from top to toe in a gellan garb. Every Burman when a lad has been a novice or neophyte and worn the sacred garb, and it does not follow that once a priest always a priest. A Poonghee can throw aside the sacred dress, and resume the ordinary functions of life like any other Burman. Very few adhere to the priestly tribe after becoming adults, but those who do, seldom abandon it afterwards. Those who do so are looked down upon and despised.

The Poonghees assert that eternal damnation and punishment form no part of their belief. They say that every creature to whom the breath of life has been given, has a right eventually, after expiating its crimes and errors, to return to the Godhead whence it sprung. Every chance is given by the Creator to those He has created, and by successive transmigrations or transmutations, the individual expiates his, hers, or its crimes, errors or faults, and in time is absolved of them and obtains Nibhan, which is not annihilation, as some assert and deplore, but incorporation with the Deity. The introduction of nats, beloos, and other superstitions are excrescences of a later growth, and altogether foreign to the Bhuddist religion as originally founded. A priest can possess no property, he is even dependent for his daily bread on the charity of his flock. Boys, with bowls suspended round their necks, go the rounds of a village and collect alms, without solicitation daily, and this forms their food for the day. Apart from a village or town a number of houses are erected by the

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charitable for the use of the Poonghees and their neophytes. Many of these buildings are very beautiful specimens of fantastic architecture, every part is in harmony and exquisite proportion and the wood carving is particularly good; these monasteries are divided into dormitories, chapels and school rooms, and with their carved roofs, one rising above another, form exceedingly pretty groups—like all structures in Burmah, they are built on piles raised from six to eight feet off the ground, and are principally of wood. Every morning about an hour before daylight a gong sounds and school commences, every boy shouting out his lesson at the top of his voice; the effect on a stranger sleeping in a zyat close by is startling, he is awakened by, as it appears to him, unearthly screeching and is apt to imagine that he is surrounded by hordes of savages or wild beasts or demons! Every Burman is taught to read, write and cipher. Many of the Poonghees are first-rate mathematicians, can calculate eclipses, and are also learned in astronomy. Every Burman also knows something of the stars and can guide himself by them at night. Their zodiacal signs are almost identical with ours.

The priests, most deservedly, have great influence with the people, who consult them on most subjects and are guided by their advice.

No Poonghee may touch money or look at a woman. Should he meet one of the opposite sex, he interposes a huge fan, which is always carried, keeps his eyes on the ground and passes on. They, like all Burmese, are exceedingly cleanly in their persons and habits. They attend funerals and pray over the dead. A head priest presides over every group of monasteries and his word is law to the other priests, he is generally an exceptionally good man and well versed in Pali, in which language their sacred books are written on leaves of the sacred or other palm, neatly cut, bound together by boards and kept in heavy wooden boxes, which are more or less elaborately carved and gilded. When a priest of any note dies, he is embalmed, either in honey, or the viscera are removed, and small bamboo pipes inserted into different parts of the body, terminating in the ground; through these the noxious gases and oily substances are absorbed, and preservation is further promoted by the aid of herbs, &c. The body is often kept a year before cremation. It is deposited in a grand mausoleum especially erected for that purpose, enclosed in a wooden coffin which rests on a pedestal some eight feet off the ground. It is guarded day and night by neophytes and other priests. In a neighbouring plain are built many mausoleums, all of perishable materials, but so disguised as to resemble solid structures. In the central one a funeral pyre is prepared and the whole space enclosed by bamboo railing inside, which none but priests are permitted to enter. On the day fixed for the cremation, thousands, dressed in their very best, proceed to the appointed place, some in carts, some on pony-

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back and many on foot, men, women and children all congregating together; booths are erected and buying and selling briskly carried on. The coffin is deposited on a four-wheeled platform and dragged from its temporary resting place to that of the final scene. To this car are attached long canes or ropes, manned by many people, who drag it along, preceded, by Poonghees uttering prayers for the dead, whilst a band, as strong as can be got together, play different musical instruments and create a deafening uproar. On approaching the place of sepulture, the rear ropes as well as those in front are manned, and a farce of pulling one against the other is gone through amidst deafening yells and

REST HOUSE. PLATFORM OF THE GREAT SHOAY DAGON PAGODA.

The above engraving is a rest house, at the entrance of the platform on which stands the great Shaoy Dagon Pagoda, the principal one in all Burmah. It is all but, if not quite, 400 feet above the surrounding plain, the upper half being gilt, and the Tsu, which surmounts the whole, cost upwards of £20,000, the bells, &c., though supposed to be of bell metal, have a large proportion of gold mixed with the baser metals. The present Tsu was presented by the late King of Burmah.

laughter! Sometimes, though but rarely the coffin is upset and its ghastly contents are thrown out—the car is pulled now forwards, then back, swaying to and fro and this pretended struggle goes on sometimes for the better part of an hour, when those in the rear give away and the car is triumphantly dragged within the enclosure, the coffin placed over the already prepared pyre, which is made of most inflammable materials and has also some coarse gunpowder, somewhat damp, enclosed inside it and from which are attached long canes leading beyond the outside enclosure, to these

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again are fastened numerous rockets. The priests kneel down and with clasped hands and bowed heads, pray for the repose of their dead brother and solicit Guadama to grant him Nibhan. After they have retired all who can get at the rockets set them on fire, and he who is the first to ignite the pyre rejoices, for he believes he will be lucky ever after. Whilst all this turmoil is taking place, the women, gorgeously arrayed have been carrying on a brisk trade, or extensive flirtations, for these people combine duty, pleasure, profit, and respect for the dead all together. Many rockets are fired before one is successful, and their hissing is incessant, at last the final catastrophe is at hand, a slight explosion followed instanta-

STEPS LEADING TO PRONU PAGODA.

It will be seen from the above engraving that all the principal Pagodas or Shrines are erected on eminences, and have covered-in steps leading to their platforms. There are two colossal figures, of which only one is shown in the drawing, Pronu Pagoda—one has a tiger in its jaws and the other a woman. Each are upwards of 90 ft. high.

neously by jets of fire and flames announce that the pyre is alight. A rush is made, the fence knocked down and all the buildings and dummy funeral cars, so gracefully erected at much cost and expense are fired amidst the yells and laughter of a vast populace and burnt to the ground, and the remains of the Poonghee who has lived among the people perhaps for half a century, administered to their spiritual comforts, and taught them such knowledge as they possess, are consigned to mother earth as ashes to ashes. If the defunct has been notably learned or held in extra veneration.

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his ashes are collected, placed in a copper, silver or golden urn, and deposited either in a Pagoda or inside the breast of an image of Guadama. This scene, though repugnant to our ideas of what is befitting such a solemn occasion, is meant by the Burmese in all seriousness as a tribute to departed goodness.

The gorgeous apparel of the men, women and children, the numerous flags and banners erected within the enclosure, the many buildings, gaily painted and resplendent with gold, tinsel, and silk, and the selling and bartering carried on amid the laughter and merriment of all concerned, render most incongruous the otherwise sombre scene, and is I fancy without a parallel in the world as funeral obsequies.

Men and Women.

The Burmese of both sexes delight in gorgeous apparel—most men possess a silk putsoo or two, which they use for grand occasions. Formerly, only the poor wore cotton wraps, but the Manchester firms turn out such admirable cotton putsoos, after Burmese patterns, that they are now almost universally adopted by the people for daily use, only the wealthy still adhering to the silk garment. A Burman is very proud of his hair, lets it grow very long, keeps it well oiled, and ties it in a knot on the top of his head, winding a many coloured handkerchief round it to serve as a turban. His dress consists of the putsoo from the waist to the knee, turned back between the thighs and fastened at the back; a loose white jacket covers the upper part of his body, and is fastened in front by loops and extends a little below the hips. The lobes of his ears have huge holes, in which he either inserts amber earrings or cheroots. He is tattooed from the waist to a little below the knee; this process takes considerable time, it is commenced when quite a lad and is not probably finished until he has reached years of discretion. It is sometimes done hurriedly, the patient being stupefied by opium and occasionally dying under the operation. This tatooing is supposed to be a sign of manhood and is a *sine quâ non*.

The Burman is a merry fellow, very hospitable and mostly very kind-hearted, easily swayed for good or evil, and amenable to kind treatment; he resents ill-usage or harshness. Individually, he is a plucky fellow, and though short in stature, very well made and possessing considerable strength; much given to wrestling and even to boxing, when, however, kicking is allowed. One of his favourite pastimes is football, not played in accordance with Rugby, or any European rules, but in a manner peculiar to Burmese and Malays. A number of men stand round in a ring and kick a hollow sphere, made of plaited cane, to one another, and it may be struck by any part of the body, hands excepted. Great agility and address are required in this game to keep it up

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for any time, as the ball must never touch the ground. As long as he is well treated and allowed to help himself to a cheroot, a little tea and sugar occasionally, a Burman makes a very faithful indoor servant, better as a dressing boy, for he excels neither in cooking nor waiting at table, nor are washermen known amongst them; they are more useful as horse-keepers, but unless well looked after will seldom groom their charges properly.

I never saw a Burman drunk; yet when possessed of means, he will pass whole days and nights in eating, drinking and gambling, and sleeping off their effects. They are most improvident, "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof" being their motto.

Though capital boatmen, they are so lazy that they have allowed the greater part of the traffic in the principal ports to be monopolised by Madrassees and Chinese; yet they will work from early morn till late at night when on a journey, poling their boats up stream if there be no wind. There mode of propulsion is peculiar; two or more men run forward, plant the pole well into the bank, then stooping down insert the end of the pole just above the collar-bone, and by throwing up alternately one leg and then the other, push the boat along, whilst they themselves are almost in a horizontal position; the muscles above the collar-bone are so developed in old boatmen as to become almost deformities.

They possess capital boats, many of them of several tons burden, with yards and masts out of all proportion to their size. Some of the yards measure 120 feet across. As their boats possess no keel, they can only sail before the wind, which they do at a great speed.

A Burman is at heart a vagabond; he won't work if he can help it, and if forced to do so by necessity he only does enough work to buy the necessaries he requires; it has been estimated that if he work three days he can spend the remainder of the week in idleness, and that one year's labour will produce sufficient to sustain him for three years, such is the natural productiveness of the land. Even if by a lucky hit, either by sale of rice or paddy, or a successful speculation in timber or other produce, a Burman realizes a fortune, he speedily spends it, either in building a Pagoda, a Phoongie house, or in gambling and debauchery.

He is a gambler born and bred, delights in a main of cocks, using fish bones for spurs. He will sit up and laugh over a Poey, or native theatricals, for several nights together; he will go miles to see a boat race, and bet all he possesses, and even more, on the result. On the slightest provocation he will back his pony, and race it against any other.

The Burmese do not marry till fully grown up. They are not given to that pernicious Indian habit of marrying children, preferring to choose fully developed girls for brides. A man generally chooses his own wife and woos her, and there is a good

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deal of love-making and coquetry before the final knot is tied. If a girl take a cheroot, light it, puff it for a second and then present it to a man, it is a sign that she favours his suit; but the girls are such arrant coquettes, they will keep a dozen men in a state of uncertainity, and this often leads to quarrels and bloodshed; for though the Burmese religion forbids the shedding of blood, yet when his evil passions are roused, or if he imagines himself aggrieved, whether justly or unjustly, there is not a more cruel, vindictive, blood-thirsty wretch. He then thinks nothing of taking life, often with fearful cruelty and torture.

As a rule, after marriage, the men are not unduly jealous of their wives, allowing them to mix freely in their own society, and they are even permitted to visit European families; yet many a murder can be traced to the green-eyed monster. Crimes of violence against women, followed by murder, are not unfrequent.

A Burman is generally as kind hearted as a child, at other times a fiend incarnate, and the introduction by us of opium farms and grog shops has not helped to improve his morals nor his naturally changeable disposition. If left to himself, as a rule, a Burman is truthful, but he is a good diplomatist, and fully realizes that language was given to man to disguise his thoughts. He shows respect by sitting down on entering a room, unlike other Orientals, who stand up. He is not a petty thief or pilferer, but if he can carry out a raid, or wholesale decoity, accompanied by violence, he looks upon it as a lark, joins in it heart and soul, and spares neither age nor sex. He is a filthy feeder; gnapee, a horrid mixture of rotten fish and salt, being one of his principal relishes. He will eat almost every thing which is either killed or dies. He is partial to a dead pony, horse, elephant, buffalo, or even to the sacred cow or bullock, and little recks of what disease they have died, whilst a snake is a *bonne bouche*. He drinks tea, but without milk. He will touch neither eggs nor milk, as they have germs of life in them. He is an inveterate smoker, learning to smoke while at the breast; and can swim from babyhood.

Fond of children as they are, the Burmese do not trouble themselves to look after them, and dabbling as the infants do in mud and water with little or no clothing, no wonder that the mortality amongst them is excessive. Most Burmese are keen sportsmen, but only a few indulge in the chase, as it is forbidden by their laws and religion; but every village possesses one or more shikaries, who supply their neighbours with venison, and though the taker of life is looked upon as one damned, it does not prevent others from purchasing from him the spoil of the chase.

All Burmese are capital fishermen, and as a great many indulge in this pastime who would not kill a beast, I fancy some relaxation has been made in their religious tenets regarding the taking of life, where the finny tribe is concerned.

The rivers and estuaries of Burmah supply an unlimited and

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most wholesome supply of fish, crabs, eels, prawns, &c., &c., and their jungles abound with game, which the shikaries kill either by blazing at night, or from a machan, or catch in pit-falls.

The wants of a Burman are few, and they are readily supplied to him by bounteous nature; the few vegetables he requires, such as bringals, chillies, pumpkins, yams, sweet potatoes, &c., &c., his wife and children grow by merely scratching the surface of the ground and scattering the seed, which appears to grow up spontaneously, only requiring weeding to come to maturity. He, or some member of his family, makes his own gnapee, and distils his own arrack from rice, and his female relations weave cloth for his and their own use. He grows his own tobacco in the alluvial deposit on a river's bank as the waters recede. He rears his own silkworms.

BURMESE WOMEN.

He can turn his hand almost to anything, is a fair carpenter and blacksmith, smelts iron, and forges such tools as he requires. He builds his own canoe and paddles it uncommonly well. There are fewer beggars in Burmah than in any country in the world.

Although a Burman has no cares, he is a restless mortal. He is of no use as a soldier in our acceptation of the word, because he is impatient of restraint and dislikes discipline, but when taught the rudiments of drill and to aim correctly, he becomes a capital "Irregular of Irregulars."

As botanists, the Burmese would shame most Europeans, for they can distinguish every tree and shrub, give it its correct name and know its medicinal uses, if any.

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Every village has attached to it one or more zyats or resting places for travellers, and water is deposited in small sheds along all their thoroughfares for the use of the weary. No native of India or European need fear to throw himself on the charity of the first village he comes to.

I must own that with all their faults I like the Burmese very much. They are the only people in our Eastern possessions that Europeans can consort with. They are devoid of the cringing servility so common amongst other people under our rule.

They have an extraordinary idea that if they insert pieces of gold and silver under the skin on their chest and arms it renders them invulnerable!

The Burmese women before they become mothers are noted for their well proportioned though small figures. To one accustomed to seeing the regular features so prevalent amongst the many pretty Indian girls, the Mongol-like features of their Burmese sisters look ugly and repellent, but after a while this impression wears off; the women of the country have many pretty little ways, and they are very cleanly: their hands and feet are small and well-shaped, arms symmetrical—the head well put on to the neck: their carriage is erect: they allow no hair to grow anywhere except on their heads, where it is most luxuriant, and is taken the greatest care of, tied up *a la chinois*, with a wreath or garland of flowers entwined: they disfigure their ears, which are naturally small and pretty, by boring huge holes in the lobes and wear in them either gold or amber cylindrical shaped ear-rings—they cover themselves over with necklets, bracelets, rings, &c., and the Burmese gold and silversmiths are nearly as good as those in Cuttack, Trichinopoly or Delhi.

A Burmese girl who wishes to kiss, presses her nose up against a face and sniffs! She is a born coquette and will spend hours in adorning her person. Their dress consists of a tight under jacket to support the bust and a loose and flowing jacket over for show—a gaudy scarf hangs down over the shoulders—from the waist they wear either a many coloured silk thamine, which exposes the inside of one leg half way up the thigh, or a "loongie," which is more decent, being a sort of petticoat, fastened round the waist and exposing no part of the person. All the women smoke and chew bitel nut, but have nice white even teeth; they can swim as a rule and delight in dabbling in water, and invariably bathe once, perhaps oftener, during the day.

The Burmese seldom have more than one wife, and she reigns supreme in the house, and conducts the purchase or sale of all necessaries. A girl's great ambition is to keep a stall in a bazaar; it is her introduction into society and is equivalent to our own girls being brought out. They are a merry, pleasant race, and many of the 4th Seikhs, when they returned to the Punjaub, took

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back with them Burmese girls, preferring them as wives to their own far comelier women.

There is not a prettier sight in the world than a crowd gathered round a Pagoda on a gala day, with the men resplendent in gorgeous apparel, the women and children in their best, pretty, plump, well-made figures, smiling faces, banners streaming, flags flying, backed by the beauty of the scenery and the grand proportions of their numerous Pagodas. On these occasions the people are as merry as crickets, are constantly on the move, and thoroughly enjoy themselves. The women can not as a rule either read or write, for their priests are not allowed to teach them; a few have been educated by well-meaning missionaries, but whether from coming in contact with *native* children, or some other reason, these girls too often are not as well conducted as their more ignorant sisters.

Every Burmese girl is a born actress, and delights in taking a part in a Poey or National Drama. There is no stigma attached to women who take a part in these performances, as there is to dancing girls in India, and they are invariably well-conducted, modest girls.

They have some curious customs, such as throwing pots of water over any one and every one they meet on their New Year's Day, which corresponds, I think, with our 1st of April: what this is typical of I know not, but the custom is universal. Like the men, the women are inveterate gamblers; at a boat or pony race, the men and women bet together freely, and often a girl, after losing all she possesses, will stake herself against what she considers her value, and if she lose, she follows the winner and becomes his wife or concubine, for the two are nearly synonymous in Burmah.

On the slightest provocation a woman will commit suicide, generally by means of opium, which, thanks to a paternal government, can be purchased without restriction in every bazaar. Many of their customs are barbarous, not the least being the treatment of a woman in travail; she is half roasted and trampled upon, and too often death supervenes. When a person dies the body is laid out in state, and professional women are sent for, who howl the death chant, which once heard can never be forgotten or mistaken. Undertakers are sent for, and the coffin prepared in the public street in front of the house. Cremation takes place within the same or next day after death; all the Burmese excepting the very poor burn their dead.

Round all Pagodas, may be seen a lot of old women with shaven heads dressed in white, whom Dr. Gordon, in his *Trip to Burmah*, styles "Virgins of the Temple," a term which would astonish the old hags not a little, as they have done their best in their youth to multiply and replenish the earth; the proper name for them is "slaves of the Pagoda." When a woman gets frightfully old and indigent and has no one to support her, she shaves her head and

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becomes an outcast, sweeps the Pagoda platform, lives in some remote corner, and subsists on the offerings made to Nats, which is looked upon as shameful by the other Burmese, who will not eat with her or associate with her class.

No Burman will marry even a good looking young girl, if he knows that she has been one of these unfortunate creatures. Their names are most curious and have nothing to do with the paternal appellation. A man may even go by several names, commencing with being called "Little one," "Boy," "Mr. Boy," "Man," "Old Man." The men usually style themselves "Mong Shuay" this or that, Mr. Golden or Silver so and so; the variations are innumerable; the same names apply to the women with Ma as a prefix instead of Mong.

F. T. P.

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A REAL QUEEN.

CHAPTER VI.

Caspar.—But if thou hast occasion of a lie, see that it be of good, honest black, and not of your brown, nor of your grey, nor of your white the least of all. For out of black, what can grow more than but blackness? But out of white groweth fruit of the fiend's own colour, which is to darkness even what the hue of Saturn of a midwinter midnight showeth beside the glory of the light of a midsummer noon. See thou to it—mistrust a white horse, a white hand, a white sepulchre, and a white lie.

OSWALD lost no time in driving to the Fanes'. Sophy's message had startled and alarmed, but had scarcely surprised him: for he had, since his return from his latest chapter of travel, formed his own opinion as to the mental and bodily condition of his old friend. He had been dreading a breakdown, and, during his impatient drive, only trusted that it might be but of the body, and not of the mind. Well—in any case it was fortunate he was in London, for Sophy's sake, who was that rarest of mortals: an heiress without friends. If she needed him, he must even consent to let his life's search grow cold for a time, hard as that would be.

So he passed the literary fortifications, outworks, citadel, and all. But, before he had time to look round the barely lighted drawing-room or to ask a question, he heard a sob, so eloquent of desolation and despair as to make him feel that something must have happened that was worse than the worst he had feared.

"Sophy?" he said, half aloud. "What has happened? I am here."

"And—he is Dead!" said she.

And what is more right and natural than that a man should die? Surely, when we consider it in the cold light of reason, there is no mystery of life greater than the manner in which we regard so simple and so common a thing. After all, it is infinitely more wonderful that a man should live than that he should die: for he spends his moments amid a flight of poisoned arrows, and every instant that he escapes is a new miracle. Nor was there any especial element of pathos in the fact or in the manner of Æneas Fane's departure from a world wherein his part had been

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to prove that one man who gives his whole mind to the work can waste more time than any ordinary ten. Unless indeed there might be something like pathos in the wonder what occupation could be found beyond the grave for a collector's disembodied soul. To discover the vanity of its own nature would be the same thing as sheer annihilation—yet one cannot suppose that it would be let loose among such tempting specimens as comets and stars. Yet Oswald, who had remained unimpressed by all the flood of life from which he had freshly come, felt all the awe which, in a house of Death, tells a man that the new Master of that house is the one reality among a world of phantoms and stage-shadows. He had, in his wanderings, met with Death often: but had never till now been under the same roof, alone with Him and a girl.

Try as we will, where Death is concerned only common-place are the things we can feel, and only most utterly common-place the things we can say, if we are so foolish as to say anything at all. Oswald was not foolish—at least in this way. Something no doubt would have to be done presently, when the time should come for business, but nothing now, except to give Sophy the comfort of an old friend's sympathetic presence until her tears should change into articulate words.

It was not long before he heard, in fragments, the story of the end of Æneas Fane. Sophy had been dressing for Mrs. Derwent's reception, and had gone to her uncle's study, his inmost treasure-house, to bid him good-night, and to see that he had all he could possibly want for the next few hours, only to find him crushed, as it were, into his arm-chair, scarcely conscious, and apparently in an agony of pain. An open book, the *Flora* was at his feet, just where it had fallen from his hand. The nearest Doctor came without a moment's delay: but her uncle had never rallied, had never spoken, had never made a conscious sign, and had died before Sophy had realised that he was dying.

Oswald remained in Wilton Terrace that night, sitting in the room where his old friend's heart had broken down, and thinking over Sophy's affairs. As to these he foresaw some little trouble, for these had been entirely in her uncle's hands from the beginning, and it would probably prove difficult to discover precisely how they stood, with a view to arranging them. However, that would be merely a question of time and trouble, not to be grudged to Rosamond's sister by Rosamond's lover, even though it meant the robbery of precious days from the work he lived for. Even from that point of view matters might have been worse: it was not as if he had just found that there was a hint of a clue in Central Africa or at the Antipodes, which unless it were grasped immediately would slip from his fingers. For Silver Moldwarp was in London: and, for the moment, Silver Moldwarp represented the whole of the clue—not much indeed, but still all. As for Sophy herself, he could not feel that the death of her

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uncle, at a reasonable age, would prove by any means an irreparable misfortune. The old gentleman, with his books upon the brain, had been doing his unconscious best to ruin the poor girl's life and to cut her off from her kind, and it had become inexplicable to Oswald that she had never rebelled—perhaps that was a sign that the crushing process was being only too well done. She would now be able to take her place in the world, or, better still, to go down to live at Crossmarsh and live there quietly and usefully, among her own people and on her own land. She would easily find some middle-aged companion of the right sort, and Oswald, wherever he might be, would somehow manage to look after her in a general brotherly way.

And so, having overleaped the immediate trouble of the inquest and the lawyers, and having disposed of Sophy in that masculine manner which leaves the chances of love and marriage out of every question except one's own, Oswald's mind was free to fall back upon itself and Rosamond. Not Death under the same roof could for long interfere with that long thought which had become a second nature—which had only become the stronger with the decline of passion, or rather had itself become a passion, devouring alike all other realities and dreams. It never occurred to him that his search for one whom reason could not doubt was dead, had been practically proved as vain as had been Æneas Fane's for the Phœnician Sun Dial. It never occurred to him that it was almost as endless and worthless as another man's devotion of a life to getting richer, or yet another's to the pursuit of pleasure. If he thought of the matter in this light at all, it seemed to him at the very least as sane as theirs. Every man tries to get what he most wants. Oswald did not want more money. He did not want pleasure. He did not want to make a name. There was nobody who needed his help: nor was he one of those people who feel impelled to work for the benefit of the world at large. The ruling motive of his life was to carry out to the end what he had begun: and he must cease to be himself, as as he was made, before he could lay this search aside. And no less must he cease to be himself before he could tear away from him the faith that Rosamond had not perished nine years ago, and therefore might be living still. He thought the chance of finding her living better worth working for than the possession of pleasure for which he had no taste, or of money for which he had no need. I suppose he was another case of the dog who snatched at the shadow. But who is not? And then there is another legend about a mote and a beam.

And now it was less likely that he would cease to be himself than ever: because he had obtained an actual thread of a possible clue for the first time during nine years. Silver Moldwarp professed to have seen Lawrence Derwent, and in London. Moreover there was evidently more in this profession than had met

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the ear. It meant that Lawrence Derwent had succeeded in his escape, and that his movements were of interest to exceedingly unlikely people, and in a way that had a significance of its own. Silver Moldwarp's peculiar connection with Rosamond's disappearance remained unforgotten, and his connection moreover with the simultaneous disappearance of Lawrence Derwent from Lowmoor. Of course there had been nothing definite in the connection. But he had played a conspicuous part in the search for the latter, and had signalised his paraded failure by turning out to be an extraordinarily skilful rogue. If those who hide can find, it is no less true that those know where not to look who do not want to find. Oswald remembered how he had searched the neighbourhood of Crossmarsh and Windgates, inland and along the shore, well nigh inch by inch, while the gaol people and the police had been scarcely less active. The man from Lowmoor must have been hidden somewhere all the time, and supplied with food until the coast was clear. He could not have been thus hidden and supplied without friendly or purchased aid. Though a prisoner, he might be in a position to promise a reward: and, as one scoundrel, he might find a friend in another. Since that conversation at the bookseller's, Oswald had become half convinced that Silver Moldwarp had aided Lawrence Derwent to escape, and that through him the secret of the yet greater mystery was to be discovered, if it was to be discovered at all.

But this strong belief, well founded as it was, obliged him to proceed with the utmost caution. He wanted to get at Lawrence Derwent himself; and so cunning a rogue as Moldwarp was not to be dealt with easily. If the bookseller and the escaped convict were still friends, a word of warning would spoil all. So, as yet, he scarcely knew what to do. It was unfortunate that the old rascal knew him, and knew, moreover, that he knew him to be a rogue. Possibly a heavy bribe might serve, made conditional on results. But then Oswald was troubled with one rare quality—a distrust of his own sharpness. He fancied himself capable of being taken in, and Silver Moldwarp to be capable of taking in cleverer men than he. For had he not taken in, for years, a learned scholar like poor Æneas Fane?

No inspiration came to him that night, as he sat among the ghosts of forgotten authors that had been gathered together by hands now nearly as dead as they. Had his mind been free, and had it been open to fancies, he might have seen a vision of wasted labour impressive enough to turn him away from his own search, and to dismiss even Rosamond herself to the region of her fellow shadows. If we were to think of why we work, what work would ever be done? Happily for Oswald, he never thought of the Why, but always and only of the How. So he saw no visions and dreamed no dreams. And when the morning came his only thought was, with a sigh, that he had brought himself no nearer to a plan,

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and that, for the moment, the actual Sophy must come before the shadowy Rosamond. Well—he needed time to think. The change of thoughts might not prove wholly thrown away.

He saw Sophy for a few minutes before going out on her business, and found her, now that her first outburst of grief and terror had spent itself, scarcely able to realise a blow that, in effect, had swept the whole of her past life away. Her affection for her uncle had not been that which comes of sympathy—he was not the man to have inspired the deepest sort of filial love, even in a child of his own. But nobody can ever be missed like a man of one dominant and aggressive idea, who makes that the centre of the household circle until all about him learn to regard it as an essential and indispensable part of their own lives. Uncle Æneas, with his coins, his flints, his laces, or his books, had been bound up with every association of her life from the beginning—she could only feel herself left alone without chart or compass on a strange sea. The cable of habit had broken, with a sharper shock than belongs to the severing of any more delicate and precious cord. Such grief is not the less sharp at the time for being so much inspired with self-pity—rather the more: especially when that troublesome creature, conscience, enters, and charges us with feeling less sorrow for our dead than for our living selves.

Oswald's first visit was to the Doctor, who had no doubt done his best in a case where, as he told his visitor, there was simply nothing to be done. "Heart? unquestionably," said he. "Of course there will have to be an examination, and an inquest: but it will all be arranged very quietly, and with no pain or trouble to the young lady."

Thence Oswald went to make arrangements for the funeral, and then returned to the house, and, shutting himself in the study, set to work upon sorting the papers which, alas, require no taste for collecting to bring together.

Æneas Fane's documents mostly consisted of letters referring to his various dealings, of obsolete catalogues, and of bibliographical memoranda. There were also a journal or two, kept in a fragmentary manner: the draft of an unfinished monograph on an unusual form of the letter M in some manuscript or other: the lease of the house in London, and the ordinary bills and receipts of a householder. Of such old letters or other written relics as give a soul to a dead man's *escritoire* there were no signs. The man had lived an absolutely single life in more senses than one—there was more pathos in the want of one such touch than in a whole cart-load of memories. Can he be rightly even called dead, who leaves no sign that he has ever been alive?

Then followed a rather curious paper—a scheme, neatly drawn out on foolscap, for the establishment, custody, and development, of the Fane library—a wonderful institution, containing ancient books to the value of a fabulous number of thousands of pounds,

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all the property of Miss Sophia Fane and her heirs, but to be available to students and scholars under certain stringent conditions therein fully specified. There was something of child's play, or of the revelry of imagination, in this elaborate scheme which found no comprehension in Oswald's strictly practical mind. Why should a reasonable being amuse himself with building such castles in the air? He did not recognise in it the one poem that Æneas Fane had ever written, not the less a poem for being composed in the form of legal prose. Looking at it from a reasonable point of view, it was preposterous altogether. It priced books as if they were diamonds, and treated Miss Sophia Fane as if its imagined possession rendered her a queen of millionaires, and, through its author, an arch-benefactress of the world. There, for example, was that precious *Flora*, set down in the schedule as representing five thousand pounds sterling. It could not be a joke, because Æneas Fane would have thought it sacrilege to jest about such things. Perhaps Oswald would have understood it better, had he been conscious that he had a yet more unreasonable dream of his own. But then to be a man of action is to dream without knowing that one dreams.

He had been something more than two hours over this monotonous work when he came upon a document that made him start and knit his brows together quickly before he had read half-a-dozen lines. But even when he had read it twice through, first at a gallop, then slowly and carefully, he was yet more bewildered than at the beginning. This, at any rate, was no jest, whatever the other thing might be. He was engaged in a third anxious reading when a knock at the front door was followed by the card of Mr. Horace Derwent, with a pencilled request for at least one minute's interview.

There could not have been a moment at which he was less ready to be disturbed; for the document, taken by itself and without further light, meant ruin to Sophy at the hands of a madman, so far as he could yet guess at its meaning. However, he could hardly deny himself to the only friend, besides himself, of the dead man.

"What is all this terrible business?" asked Horace. "Good God—when I called and saw all the blinds down I thought—but, thank God, I thought wrong. How is she—Miss Fane?"

"A terrible business? Yes, indeed. He died suddenly, of heart disease. Of course it is a terrible blow to the poor girl."

"And at the very time when we were making fools of ourselves—I was sure, though, all the time, that there was something wrong. What can I do?"

"Nothing. I am doing all there is to be done. I am almost her brother——"

"Yes: I know. But still I might do something. You are full of business, I see: and there must be other things—Of course

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she couldn't see everybody. But she might see me. . . . . Hargrave—I thought *she* was dead, when I saw all those blinds. And even now—I can't say just what I mean—I want to see with my own eyes that she's alive."

Something in the tone or manner of his acquaintance struck Oswald with a new light, though his mind happened to be at the moment anything but open to any ideas save those connected with the estate of Æneas Fane. And that something made him far from anxious to allow a meeting until he had learned a great deal that was still utterly dark to him.

"No," he said, "I don't think Miss Fane would care to see anybody to-day—not even you. She hasn't borne the blow worse than she needs must, but I've no doubt she would wish to be alone: and as for doing anything, there is nothing to be done, more than I am doing now."

"Of course I should not wish to trouble her. Let me see—you're not related to the Fanes?"

"No. I only hoped to have been. But why do you ask? I am their oldest friend, and have known them since I was a child."

"Well then, Hargrave—I asked because I wanted to know just how much right you had to speak for Miss Fane: that's all. I fancy that perhaps she would see me: anyhow I should like the choice to be hers."

He did not speak in a manner at which anybody could possibly take offence, though it rather surprised Oswald by its most uncharacteristic air of decision. Evidently this quiet young man, to whom self-assertion had always seemed too much trouble to be worth the taking, was not without a will of his own, when he had occasion for its exercise. And, as to control of Sophy, whatever duties Oswald might assume, of rights he had absolutely none. Assuredly Sophy was entitled to see whomsoever she pleased. And in this case, how could he be sure that she would not please? Between any two given young men, one of them always feels himself, and generally with good reason, to be master, whenever there comes a clash of wills. As between Horace Derwent and Oswald Hargrave, this position had hitherto been held by the latter: and now it seemed that there was at any rate one matter in which the former meant to hold his own. And rebellion was the easier, seeing that Oswald was, in all things save one, an eminently reasonable man, and therefore foredoomed to give way before one who was not reasonable, and therefore stronger than reason.

"After all," said Horace, "there's no reason why I shouldn't make a clean breast of it to an old friend of the house, like you—and I hope a friend of my own besides. I meant last night to ask her to be my wife—and I mean to ask her as soon as I find her able to listen. I must, therefore know something of her plans: and it is now, in her trouble, that she ought to feel that I am by her side."

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"You wish to marry Sophy Fane!"

"Of course I do. Is there anybody who wouldn't, if he had the chance? Of course I don't know yet whether she would marry me. But I must know it, and that soon, if I'm to be any sort of use to myself, or good for anything in the world. And I am not without hope—why should I be? Of course it isn't a time to be talking to her of myself to-day, or perhaps for many days—but——"

But Oswald's ears were growing deaf, for his mind was wandering far away. The brother of Lawrence Derwent was proposing to marry the sister of Rosamond Fane.

Believing as he believed, that, in some undiscovered but doubtless terrible way, Lawrence Derwent was connected with the death of Rosamond, if she were dead, or with her disappearance, if she were yet living, the thought suggested even hideous possibilities. Had Rosamond been murdered? For it was that solution which lay at the root of his master passion of vengeance: and in that case what could be more hideous than that Sophy should unwittingly give her hand to her sister's murderer—unless indeed she gave him her heart, which would be something more hideous still. The tragedy of nine years ago was coming home to him in a new way. And yet, ignorant as he was of all that had really happened, and hanging his faith to a belief that reason scorned, what explicable right had he to interfere between a young man who was but an acquaintance, and a girl over whom he could only usurp authority? In the nature of things there was no sort of reason why Horace Derwent of Longwood should not marry Sophia Fane of Crossmarsh. They were of suitable age, apparently of suitable character: their social position was sufficiently equal, and there was enough fortune on both sides, and to spare. Moreover Sophy was now in absolute need of a protector, and she might well live to a good old age without finding another: the marriage looked as if it had been made in Heaven, and destined to be brought to pass at Heaven's best time. And yet Oswald knew in his heart that, till the mystery was made clear, the marriage must not be.

And if Horace Derwent saw Sophy now, in the first hours of her desolation, and with her past life wholly swept away, it might be very well on the lover's part to mean to speak no word of love: but that was no reason why the words should not come of themselves. Both, under the shadow of death, would be rapt into an exalted mood, when men and women speak not as they will but as they feel. He, Oswald, would have no right to forbid the banns. But his mission must go on to the end: and then what an end, if it should be discovered that Sophy was bound by stronger ties than blood to the house at whose door the blood of her sister lay? Oswald had persistently fought away the thought of Rosamond's death till now. But now it rose before him as a terrible possibility, though still connected with him whose disappearance was so inextricably bound up with hers.

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"I will see if she can see you," said he. "Well," he thought within himself as he went upstairs not to Sophy's room, but to his own, "I'm afraid one must sometimes do some evil that worse evil mayn't come—and if all should end well for these two, they'll have lost nothing by being kept from meeting for a day. A white lie will hurt nobody but myself: and this might turn so that I oughtn't to mind being hurt by a black one. They must not meet, if I had to perjure myself black and blue. So, here goes .... Derwent," said he, returning, "it's no use your staying: she really can't see anybody to-day, not even you. She has a bad head-ache—no wonder: and she's trying to sleep. It's the best thing she can do. To-morrow——"

It was the first lie that Oswald had tried to tell in his life, and he felt that he was telling it badly. Am I the first who has ever been driven to admit that a man who in any sense or degree was supposed to be playing a hero's part told a lie deliberately and for a purpose, in order to keep two lovers apart, and so played the villain's proper *rôle*? At any rate, this liar had the grace to be ashamed, though he did not for a moment alter his opinion as to its being better to hurt his own conscience, which mattered to nobody but himself, than to risk ruining others' lives. The shame seemed punishment enough—so far.

Still he obtained one unfair advantage upon which he had not reckoned—however badly and awkwardly he might lie, nobody, not even the acquaintance of an hour, would suspect Oswald Hargrave of having tried to lie. Surely it would pay some villain to tell the truth for twenty years, by way of investing in honesty, for the sake of the grand *coup* that he might make at the end.

Horace believed him—why should he not? But the thought of Sophy in pain as well as in sorrow went to his heart, and his head throbbed in sympathy with hers. "I'm sorry—awfully," said he. "But of course she mustn't be disturbed. Only, is there *nothing* I can do for her—nothing in the world? Nowhere I could go? By Jove, Hargrave, I wish I could do her any good by setting off to the North Pole——"

"I wish you could," said Oswald; this time with unquestionable honesty. "I wish anything could do her good, poor girl."

"I will call to-morrow," said Horace. "Good-bye." And off he set, to think of what might help to cheat away a head-ache, and more than ever in a state of mind of which his mother would disapprove.

Oswald sighed with relief when he was gone: and again turned to the paper over which he had been interrupted, though with a sigh of a different kind.

"Good God! Fane must have been fit for a madhouse!" he exclaimed in thought. "There was neither jest nor child's play about that library scheme. He has really believed that he was making Sophy's fortune by turning her land into—waste paper.

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His book-shelves hold all her estate, if this paper is not a dream. The poor girl has had a mad trustee—worse than mad, because he made everybody think him sane. Let me see—who was his lawyer? Corbet, of Laxham, I suppose. Yes—I *must* run down ..... And then there'll be that confounded young fellow calling to-morrow, when my back's turned; to-morrow and every day. What's to be done? There must be no love-making till I've mastered Moldwarp; and even *that* must wait, now..... Well, there's nothing for it but another lie, and a large one this time. I've begun, and I must go through."

He rang the bell. The Fanes' parlour-maid was a sharp girl, who had for some weeks realised that Oswald was *maire du palais*, and was not likely to disobey the orders of a somewhat masterful young man.

"I'm going down into the country," said he, "perhaps for some days. You know Mr. Horace Derwent?"

"Of course, sir. He that's just gone."

"Well—your mistress is very unwell at present, and on no account to be disturbed. She must see nobody—except the doctor, *nobody:* you understand? If Mr. Derwent calls to-morrow, or any other day before I come back, your mistress is not at home. And if he asks when she will be at home, you must not know. No—you must say that she is gone into the country for some time, and that you don't know when she will be back: and that will prevent his calling again. It is of the utmost importance that she should be quite quiet, and not disturbed. Here's something for yourself, Susan. I trust your mistress to you, you see—and it depends upon if Mr. Derwent sees her whether I trust you again."

"Yes, sir," said Susan, as she took her fee, and smiled. What was more natural than that one young man should do his best to keep another out of the field while he himself was away? Oswald had not thought of that reading: but then, if he had thought of it, he would not have cared.

It was treachery, no doubt. But better treachery which could—as it seemed—cause no irreparable wrong than the risk of letting the brother of Lawrence Derwent whisper too closely in the ear of the sister of Rosamond Fane.

CHAPTER VII.

Alone!
Hath Music's self a sadder tone
Than lies in that one word—Alone?
Ah, if she hath, then let her speak
Her comfort unto hearts that break
For want of finding, mid the tares,
A weed more sorrowful than theirs
For sorrow's deepest depths unknown
To all save those that mourn alone:
And half its bitterness is gone
Whene'er we find, 'neath moon or sun,
Some sadder heart to rest our burden on.

SOPHY was in truth so free from head-ache, and so little desirous of sleep, that she had heard the knock at the door, and her heart gave a little leap at its familiar sound. Whether she was actually in

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love with Horace, after the manner accepted in books and more or less in common conversation, she as yet hardly knew. But she would have thought it perfectly natural that he should be the first to call upon her in her trouble, and her very trouble itself made her miss him—Oswald was all very well; but then all he did was for the sake of her poor dead sister's memory, and nothing for her own. He could not save her from feeling alone and uncared for in the world.

She would assuredly have seen Horace. But, as the knock produced no result, and as she did not even hear of his having called, she could only suppose herself mistaken in the sound, while a shyness, very natural in her half-developed feeling towards him, kept her from showing any interest or betraying any disappointed expectation by enquiring. Since he had not seen her, it was not he: since he had not come, he had not cared to come. That was all perfectly right, of course, and she was not going to care—or at any rate to show Oswald or the servants that she cared.

Oswald had come up for the inquest and the funeral, but had had only the scantiest and most unavoidable of talk with her, and had then left town again immediately. She scarcely noticed how full of gloom he had become—he was always grave and somewhat silent, and present circumstances were not of the sort to make any man otherwise. But he might have done something to give her cheer and comfort, and he brought her neither—he even put off everything in the shape of discussing her immediate plans. And, as the days went on, and brought nothing with them, the poor girl felt woefully in need of some excuse—to smile. She had cried enough: for her tears came easily and profusely, and when she wept she wept herself out, and required a change. One does not break one's heart over an elderly uncle whom one first knew as a collector of flints, among which his own heart appeared to be the arch specimen. Yet he was too lately gone for her to smile without an excuse, and none came. It seemed fourteen years since he had died, instead of fourteen days.

But long before that time, her pride had taken fire. Even if Horace Derwent did not care the value of a straw for her, common courtesy should have compelled the form of a visit from her uncle's professed friend. Her heart, at least, had never been party to the fiction that Horace was a veritable bookworm, who only called at Richmond Place out of a passion for first editions and worm-eaten bindings. Some instinct had told her that the book he came after was bound in another fashion, and was anything but a first edition of that wonderful volume called *Eve*. She had liked his visits—she had liked the visitor: and now it seemed as if his professed object in coming was the true one, and that she was humiliated by having been mistaken from the beginning. Her very error seemed to accuse her of conceit, and of an offence against all that was maidenly. How could she have been so vain a goose as to

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suppose that a brilliant young hero like Horace would come and spend hours among the dust and litter of dead men's brains for the sake of her voice and eyes? His real taste had no doubt been strange—but so were the tastes of young men in general. And, after all, was it more strange than if he had really cared for so common-place a girl as Sophy Fane? If Rosamond had lived —then there *would* have been a reason for his coming, besides the books, thought she. "Well—I shall know better another time. There are old women in Crossmarsh—and I will be one of them. Yes: I will go—Home."

Of course she would not give another thought to Horace, who had treated her in a manner that really amounted to downright contempt. It is quite possible that if he did call now he would find the door closed to him by genuine orders given at first hand. But this question was not put to the test: and the only visitor who succeeded in passing Susan's sentry box, was the very last person whom she either expected or cared to see. It was Dr. Rackstraw. Perhaps the sentry remembered that she was to make an exception in favour of doctors: perhaps she too rashly assumed that the order was given for the sake of excluding a single visitor. Or perhaps Dr. Rackstraw, being accustomed to diplomacy, had methods of his own for overcoming all ordinary forms of opposition. At any rate he made his appearance: and Sophy was not ill pleased to see some sort of fellow creature, though she had no liking for this particular specimen.

"I would have called long ago," he said, taking and holding her hand as if he did not mean easily to let it go. "But I was away from town when I heard the sad news. What can I say? He was a great and a good man: one of the choice spirits of the world—and I say it, though the past belonged to him, as the future to me. I want to be of some use to you. What can I do?"

"You are very kind," she said, managing to slip her hand away, and rather wondering at such enthusiasm about her uncle —so true it is that a man cannot be a prophet in his own country and in his own house. She was the quicker to withdraw her hand for feeling that the man she disliked was saying and doing what Horace ought to have said and done a full fortnight ago, and she was angry with herself for caring. "But there is nothing you can do, thank you. I am not left without the best of friends."

"Ah—you mean my young friend, Horace Derwent?" asked Dr. Rackstraw, looking round at the untouched piles of books that lay about just as their owner had left them. "Yes: he is a good sort of young man, as young men go. Not that I should have thought him exactly fitted to advise a girl in matters of business: a woman wants the help of an older head, and the grip of a harder hand." He looked at her as he spoke with that

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long, penetrated gaze that had made her feel so uncomfortable during his first visit to her uncle: and his words had angered her.

"No," said she, sharply. "I do not mean Mr. Derwent. I have not even seen him, since—I mean Mr. Hargrave."

"What! you mean to tell me—you mean to say you have not seen Horace Derwent since my dear old friend and master went where he is now conversing with those great spirits who on earth conversed with him? That is strange!"

As before, she could not rid herself of the belief that he was conscious of her thoughts: and heart, having been hurt, wished to hide. "Why is it strange?" she asked, with what she meant for sublime indifference. "He has nothing to do with my affairs, such as they are. Now that my poor uncle is gone, it is not likely that he would come."

Dr. Rackstraw was really for a moment surprised. He knew Horace, and could not account for the fact that a lover, too far gone to keep the whole world out of his secret, wearing his devotion, so to speak, written on his forehead, should not have been near the house all this time. There was no engagement, he knew, for in that case Horace would have told his mother at once, and his mother would have told Dr. Rackstraw. As it happened, the matter touched him very closely indeed. For the truth of the matter is that the Agent-General for the Goblin Islands, having called in Richmond Place to spy out the nakedness of the land, had found a beauty and an heiress—a discovery not to be lightly thrown away. Although Mrs. Derwent's sworn knight and servant, he had a warm admiration for female beauty at large, of a younger kind than his liege lady's: indeed, so catholic was he that the yellow skins, flat noses, tattooed cheeks, and lips turned inside out of the *belles* of Port Rackstraw itself had more than once led their Agent-General astray. But the apostle of civilisation preferred, on the whole, a civilised type of beauty, especially when it represented funds and lands. A philanthropist is never too rich, and the Goblin Islands had not yet wholly developed their trade.

"They must have quarreled," thought he. "I always thought that young man was a fool. It runs in the blood, I suppose." Not that he would have been much discouraged even if he had found Horace and Sophy actually engaged: for it was not likely that so weak a vessel as Horace would endure against the will of Hermon Rackstraw, who had made a good thing out of the father, whose path had been cleared of the elder son, and who had the control of the mother's purse strings. There was certainly no reason why any Derwent should for long prove troublesome to a Rackstraw. The only point in the situation he did not like was Sophy's affectation of indifference to cover real pique and anger. He knew Horace's state of heart well enough, but had not supposed that Sophy's heart had as yet spoken. Nor indeed had it, except

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to Dr. Rackstraw's ears—not by more than the faintest of whispers, even to her own.

"No," he said, "of course it isn't likely he would come, unless he cared to come. What I meant by strange was, that he hadn't cared. However, I'm glad you're not without a real friend. What are your plans?"

"Oh—I don't know. It doesn't much matter. I suppose I shall go home to Crossmarsh, and stay there. It's a quiet place: and I want quiet—"

"Is that Mr. Hargrave's plan?"

"His, and mine."

"Then I beg leave to protest against your doing any such thing. Forgive me for telling you that I know you—probably I alone know you. Yours is not the life or the nature to be buried, dear Miss Fane. I don't know what sort of place Crossmarsh is, but I can fancy. You, with your beauty, and your grand nature, have a place to fill in the great world."

Sophy opened her eyes widely. "I am sadly afraid that you know you are talking nonsense," said she. "I am bound to believe my looking-glass: and if I am grand, how very small the small must be!" So she answered, with what she believed to be perfect honesty. But, nevertheless she did not dislike Dr. Rackstraw quite so much as ten minutes ago. Evidently he was a bad judge of features and character, but such blunders at any rate show a generous enthusiasm, which is anxious to praise. Anyhow, Dr. Rackstraw had avoided making one blunder—he had not seemed to be paying a compliment, but to be merely stating an obvious fact, for the sole purpose of drawing a logical conclusion.

"No, dear Miss Fane: you are not bound to believe your looking-glass: and it is a part of grandeur to believe itself small. I can quite believe that nobody has yet told you what I tell you now. To appreciate a character like yours calls for the insight of perfect sympathy. Your uncle was a great man—but not in a way that could possibly sympathise with yours. Mr. Hargrave is—forgive me if I seem a little blunt: bluntness is our colonial virtue—is a little hard and narrow: Horace Derwent is but a boy. I do not pretend to grandeur, except in ideas, and for the benefit of humanity, but I have eyes, and I have a heart, and I have sympathy. Probably I know you better than you know yourself. I know something about Queens—and, if I were founding a new empire (than which many things are less impossible) I should offer you the crown."

"Thank you, Dr. Rackstraw. But I shall be a queen—queen of Crossmarsh. And I shall not be without subjects either—"

"No. You will never be without subjects, Miss Fane."

Her visitor was not so very awkward, after all. For a moment she was vexed with herself, for she caught herself smiling, and it was for the first time during fourteen dreary days. But then she

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had been hungry for an excuse for smiling: and she was presently pleased to have shown somebody that at any rate she was not fretting after a faithless lover. Dr. Rackstraw never smiled. But he triumphed gravely, for he felt that the ice was beginning to thaw. "She is but a child," thought he, "though the prettiest that ever was made." He might not have fallen in love unless Crossmarsh had been in the bargain: but he was not thinking of Crossmarsh now. He could love for love's sake, and had done it often—in his own way.

Weariness, solitude, the sense of desertion on Sophy's past were combining to render any human being welcome, even if it had been the King himself instead of the Agent of the Goblin Islands. By the time that the postman's knock sounded at the end of half an hour, she had become really interested in her visitor. He had ceased to pay her compliments, but had not ceased to talk over her future plans, and somehow managed to make her feel that she was the centre of interest however far away the talk might wander for a time. Now and then, moreover, he used a touch of the art wherewith Othello won Desdemona's heart through her ears. The seas in which he had laboured were far enough away to baffle her somewhat vague ideas of Antipodean geography, and to permit of decidedly romantic episodes. Perhaps it might be found that even at the Round Table itself some of the knights were long and cadaverous, with unmusical voices and awkward limbs—such unquestionably was the Manchegan knight, the very flower and crown of chivalry. Dr. Hermon Rackstraw had not only fed the hungry with the fruits of the press and clothed the naked in Manchester cotton print, but he had fought actual battles, by sea and land, and had always won. Nay, these were indications that Venus as well as Mars and Jupiter had a hand in the horoscope of Dr. Hermon Rackstraw: and, in short, he was interesting her, although, had she been asked whether she liked him, she would still have answered no.

"Will you excuse me for a moment?" she asked, when, at the end of that half hour the postman's knock was followed by a letter addressed in the hand of Oswald Hargrave. "It will be on business: and Mr. Hargrave would not write unless he had something important to say. He bowed submission: and she read—

"My Dear Sophy,—I would have come to see you instead of writing, but your poor uncle's affairs must keep me here every day till they are settled. And in any case if I did not write to you, Corbet, of Laxham, your uncle's lawyer, would—and it is better you should hear bad news from me. There is no doubt that your uncle, acting with the best intentions in the world, has made use of his large powers as your trustee to invest as much of your property as he could in what he thought the best form of security from time to time—first in old lace, which he afterwards sold at

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a ruinous loss, then in similar things with the same result, and lastly in books, believing them, for the time, to be the best security of all. Unfortunately, he was mistaken: the last and fullest catalogue has been submitted to an expert, who says that the collection would sell for little more than as waste paper. Of course you used to sign and execute whatever documents he asked you—it was one of these which originally alarmed me—and of course he fully believed that he was acting in your interest, and was more than doubling your fortune. I will come to the worst at once: so that I may sooner get to a practical proposal. Your property at Crossmarsh is mortgaged to its full value. The rents will not be more than enough to pay the interest of the mortgages, and if the estate is sold, it will do no more than pay off the principal. Under all the circumstances, both Corbet and I think that the best way will be for you to sell Crossmarsh. That can be done, with the consent of the Court of Chancery, on your giving security that your sister or her representatives should sustain no loss by the sale, in case that question should ever arise. For her sake and for yours, you will look to me to supply the security: you know that I represent her interests, and that they are my own. Next comes the question of how you are to live, meanwhile. My dear Sophy, I never wished before that I was richer than is enough for one purpose, so that I might advance what is needed to save Crossmarsh, and to purchase your uncle's library at its value on paper. But that idea is hopeless: and I must ask you in plain terms to look on me as the brother that I once was to have been. Do not let her loss come between me and the right to help you. You will not blame your uncle, I know. He was an enthusiast, and did all things for what he believed to be the best: and only acted secretly because he believed in his own opinions too firmly to wish to be troubled with those of others. You will have to live quietly, of course, and in a different manner from that which I had planned for you. But you may be entirely free from anxiety, whether I live or die. That is the chief thing that I want you to understand; and you need only let me have a line, before I see you, to tell me that you will be guided by me, who am always, dear Sophy, your most affectionate friend and brother, OSWALD.

"Direct to me, to the care of E. Corbet, Esq., Solicitor, Laxham."

Dr. Rackstraw was no longer looking at her as if reading her. On the contrary, he was looking as if he were reading one of the books, which he had taken from the floor to occupy his time while Sophy was reading her letter. "You asked me just now if I had any plans," said she, "and what they are."

She spoke with almost exaggerated quietness. But its exaggeration was just the quality of it that struck Dr. Rackstraw, and, glancing towards her quickly from his book, he saw that her cheeks

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were flushing and her eyes sparkling. "She is something much more than pretty!" thought he. "Yes," he said. "Are they made? I almost hope not—for it would be my ambition to advise. That is my mission, you know—to advise."

"Then I will take you at your word," said Sophy with unintended eagerness in her tone. "I want you to tell me how I am to earn my own living. *That* is my plan—and I don't know how."

"To earn your living? *You?*"

"Yes—I. This letter tells me I have not a penny in the world. I'm not sure whether it isn't really good news. Why should I be rich when so many better people are poor? And why should I be idle when other women have to work so hard? Poor uncle!—it never came into my head that everything was not his, to do with as he pleased. Money, for once, made one man perfectly happy—I wouldn't have it back again. And the letter *is* good news—for it tells me that I have a real friend—only he must think me a wretch, when he thinks that the sister of the girl who has ruined his life would be a burden on him to the weight of another straw. If it's shameful to be idle and rich, it must be twice the shame to be idle and poor."

"You bewilder and amaze me!" said Dr. Rackstraw. "What has happened? I would advise you—I would help you, Heaven knows. But perhaps you have read the letter wrong: it is so easy to read a business letter wrong. Is it a question of a will?"

"But you *will* put me in the way of earning a living? You *can?*"

"No doubt! if there is need."

"There *is* need. As you will help me—you had better read the letter. There is nothing in it that all the world may not know: and you will see if I have misread it. Don't think I'm crying over myself—I'm crying because Oswald is so kind. Oh, I wish Rosamond had lived instead of me! Everything would have been right for everybody, then."

Dr. Rackstraw took the letter, and read it carefully through. "It comes to this," thought he. "I was wrong in calling old Fane an old fool. I should have called him as mad as a March hare, with enough wit to hide it; mad as to the end, sane as to the means. And this young man wants Crossmarsh sold out and out either that he may throw a kindly veil over the eccentricities of Sophy's uncle or that he may buy Crossmarsh cheap—which it is depends on the character of that young man. But the advice is good, all the same. I don't want to be bothered with amateur brothers. They're a nuisance always, and mostly want, before they've done, to become something more. No: the girl mustn't take his money. That would never do. He'll think he's bought her, and expect gratitude. . . . . The miserable young hound!" he exclaimed, in an audible aside, as if his thoughts were too much for him, and had slipped out unawares.

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"Dr. Rackstraw!" cried Sophy, in a tone as if he had struck her.

"I beg your pardon," said he. "I didn't mean to think aloud. But I can't deny my own beliefs. I had been wondering why Horace Derwent hadn't been to see you. I don't wonder any more. He is a——well, an exceedingly prudent young man. As a trusted friend of your uncle, and an acquaintance of that really fine and generous fellow, Hargrave, he would find out, no man sooner, how you were likely to be left, and——these things run in families, my dear child. His elder brother stole and destroyed his own father's will—and though that was a venial offence, by comparison, it shows the sort of thing that's bred in the Derwent bone. That's what I meant by a 'miserable hound.' The expression was strong—but that it was too strong, or even strong enough, I cannot allow."

Sophy had thought he was speaking of Oswald. It hurt her hardly less to find he had been speaking of Horace, but in another way—everything had combined to embitter her against Horace, and she was angry with him more than she could have been with any man who had not made her care for him. For she was angry with herself. But, though she could not charge Dr. Rackstraw with injustice, it was one thing to feel that Horace Derwent deserved hard words, quite another thing to hear him receive what he deserved.

"But it was much too strong," said she. "He had no duty towards me,—not the least in the world. I never even expected him to come. He was my uncle's friend—not mine. He had no more reason for coming than you. I would have thanked him, as I thank you. But I should have no more blamed you for not coming than I blame him."

"That is because you are a dear, generous, unselfish girl. No—I can *not* sit and hear black called white—it is just as dishonest as the other thing. I happen to know that Mrs. Derwent was afraid of you. She believed you poor before it was generally known——"

Sophy flushed crimson, and her eyes sparkled tenfold.

"I know what you mean, Dr. Rackstraw—as if I would enter a house where I was not received by all—by mothers and sisters—with open arms! What business had these Derwents to suppose that I was laying traps and snares for their precious son? Since you know them so well, you may tell them that I would not speak to him henceforth, if he called a hundred times a day. I am poor, and they are rich, but I am as well born, and as proud. There—I have done with them all. Tell me what I shall do?"

"Mr. Hargrave generously asks you to be his pensioner," said he. "It is a handsome offer. A brother could do no more."

"And—and you advise me to become a burden on one who has been spending life and fortune on—but you know nothing of all that. Did you not hear me say I am proud?"

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"I understand you! You are the true kinswoman of the great, misunderstood spirit which is gone. . . . .No: the Derwents, one and all, are only dust to be shaken from your shoes. And it is not for you, as you say, to be a pensioner on any man."

"Then tell me how to earn my bread. All these things belong to my creditors, you see. I want to begin."

It has been said that, but for Crossmarsh, Dr. Rackstraw would never have dreamed of making love to Sophy. But he was in love with her now, after his manner, and, though marriage had certainly ceased to be a prime object, he did not feel disposed to lose the sense of ownership. He had never thought her so pretty, and so piquante as now, when he had seen her in her varied moods of grief, anger, and pride: and he certainly did not intend to lose her until she was won. Poor, and alone, he could become everything to her for just as long as he pleased: and, to judge from his present feelings, he saw no reason why it should not please him to keep her his for ever. Horace, he felt, was struck out of the field: if she could be taken from the stronger and colder grasp of Oswald, she was won.

"I honour you, my dear child," said he. "Were I as rich as I am not, I would not insult your independence by offering you help that you could not take without loss of self respect. My feelings are identical with yours. Fortunately, you might have asked ninety-nine men in a hundred for advice, and they could have told you nothing but to wait and work till your chance came—if it came. I am the hundredth man. A lady in whom I am deeply interested—a Queen in her own country—indeed that very lady of whom I was speaking to your uncle not three weeks ago—requires the companionship of a young English lady to act as her secretary and fellow traveller, or rather her philosopher and friend. She is wonderfully like a European, considering all her disadvantages of education, and is miraculously intelligent, but of course there are little things that only a woman can learn from a woman, and a girl—for she is little more—only from a girl of about her own age. I have been searching high and low for such a young lady—of course, imagining you to be in good circumstances, I did not presume to think of you. There is nothing you would not like in such a position. You would be the friend and maid of honour to a Real Queen, though of a barbarous kingdom: and—above all—you would be engaged in the great and glorious mission of civilising the benighted, forgotten corners of the human world. Think it over: and, as soon as you can, send me your decision. A word will do."

Sophy felt and looked a little alarmed. "I—I don't know," said she. "Yes, I remember your speaking of that Savage Queen. But mustn't one know her language? And the responsibility—"

"She speaks English nearly as well as you. She learned it on

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the voyage—in the most wonderful way. As for the responsibility, that is mine. She is under my charge: and if I could feel that you were her friend, I should be a happy man, and be able to attend to larger things."

Sophy cast down her eyes, and considered. In truth, when she had spoken so bravely about fighting her way through the world by the strength of her own hands, she had not supposed that a weapon would be put into her hands quite so soon. But the impulse was on her, and she could not draw back without yet further humiliation. Besides, it would be so great a thing if she could take her life into her own hands before writing to Oswald, and could say, "Thank you with all my heart—but, you see, I can stand alone." For in truth her pride had been sorely wounded on all sides, and she needed to regain self-respect, and to revindicate herself in her own eyes.

"You will need no recommendation," said Dr. Rackstraw, "but mine. Perhaps you might think it advisable to take another name—a sort of *nom de guerre*. No doubt you will see all sorts of people, and you might not care to have yourself discussed in relation to your own family affairs. It would be best for you, no doubt, to merge yourself in your position as secretary to the Queen. But of course that is for yourself to decide. . . . . I mustn't venture yet upon advertising her place of refuge to Master Horace," thought he. "He'll find it out, of course—but with three days' start a man who doesn't win a race deserves to lose."

"My name? I shall certainly take a new name. I can't have the Pitcairns and all the people in Crossmarsh talking about my uncle—I want to begin my life, and to begin it free. Of course I will take a new name: I feel—I don't know why—as if I want to hide." She did not say, "From Horace"—but though she had said that she did not know why, she did know why perfectly well. "Will you wait for me five minutes? I shall not be more."

"I certainly have the art of managing women," said Dr. Rackstraw to himself, as soon as he was left alone. "She adopts every hint I make, as if it were her own. Well—she's worth a little trouble: or for that matter, a good deal: and the Queen will take care of her, and she'll take care of the Queen. . . . . Why—are you going out, Miss Fane?" he asked, as Sophy returned, dressed for walking.

"Are you not going to take me to the Queen? I have sent for a cab—I *want* to go: and if I don't go at once—I'm afraid I shall change my mind."

"It is the hand of Fate," said Dr. Rackstraw, solemnly, "that sent me here to-day. At once, then. Come."

Sophy, in her exalted mood of decision and energy, heightened

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by the fear of being afraid, did not see Horace Derwent, who, in the exercise of some lover's folly, was without a shadow of reason passing along the terrace on the opposite side.

"Then she is *not* out of town—and I *am* a fool!" thought he. "Well—it is never too late to mend. Women—they're all the same." And he strode off, wondering why it had been worth Sophy's while to play with him and then throw him away, while his feet seemed to beat the pavement to the old tune,

"La donna è mobile qual piuma al vento—
Muta d'accento, e di pensier."

CHAPTER VIII.

Not welcoming shores, though kissed by native seas,
Not English daisies, nor ancestral trees
Make home, save in a dream—though far we roam
Name but one name, and magic leads us home.

SOPHY wondered, as she and her newly developed friend drove along in silence, where she was leaping to. Now that the plunge had been made, she realised that she had been leaping before thinking, and that her impulse had, in some inexplicable way, been directed from without rather than excited from within. But it was too late to withdraw now—she could only indulge a sort of hope that she might not satisfy this barbarian Queen, or that some other accident might keep the arrangement from being made. But, on the other hand, she could not possibly mistrust the good faith of Dr. Rackstraw, or repent having decided to act for herself without the aid or advice of Oswald, to whom she could only prove a burden. "I wish I had slept on it!" thought she. "Only then, if I had, I should never have made up my mind—and if I had lost this chance I should not have deserved another. Since I am to earn my own bread somehow, the sooner I begin anyhow. I suppose I am as fit for an etiquette mistress, as I am for anything—and after all, if I do make a mistake or two, it won't matter much with a Savage Queen. And if I don't suit, or if I can't get on, I can always go: and, as I shall have another name, no particular harm can be done. What *will* Oswald say! But I shall have done right—and I sha'n't have to argue about doing it: it will be done."

Meanwhile, the Senhora had made an unquestionable sensation. No doubt, when the first glamour of her beauty had spent itself, the general feeling was one of disappointment. As a savage, she was an impostor. But in other respects there was no doubt about her being a very charming and fascinating woman, and with an unconscious, natural dignity without the least self-consciousness that added to her charm to an infinite extent, and she was talked over with something of the interest due to a Queen who wore one of the recognised crowns of the world.

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And yet, who was she, after all?

Her jewels were undoubtedly real: and they spoke in her favour with an eloquence beyond the reach of all words. They were no impostors: and if she were an adventuress, as was hinted by at most two notorious crotcheteers, who did not like Dr. Rackstraw, her adventures must have been of a royal kind. It had become known that she was living very quietly and unostentatiously in expensive apartments taken for her by Dr. Rackstraw in Mayfair, where she had no fellow lodgers. On the morning after Mrs. Derwent's reception, that quiet house in Holford Street was a quiet house no more, and the door remained chronically open. But to the visitors, one and all—philanthropic, commercial, religious; tradesmen, speculators, and lion-hunters, the same answer was returned by the foreign servant in plain clothes—"Madam did not receive that day, and was fatigued." The visitors only had for their pains the view of an ordinary London entrance passage, and the power to say that they had left a card on royalty.

But Dr. Rackstraw had evidently the *petite* as well as the *grande entrée:* and he was instantly admitted, without even the trouble of enquiring if Madam received. Sophy's heart beat: for, though the Doctor had by main force, as it were, taken possession of her faith, she felt as if she were entering a lion's den. She followed him up the rather dark stairs, and presently found herself in a rather gaudily but not uncomfortably furnished drawing-room, evidently arranged for tenants of wealth or rank, but without any special sort of character.

"You had better sit down," said Dr. Rackstraw, "and when the Senhora enters, don't try to pay her royal honour. She is *incognita*, you know—but of course if you bring in your Majesty once or twice, as if by accident, you will do yourself no harm. Don't be afraid, dear Miss Fane . . . . .Ah—here she comes."

Sophy's heart could not help beating a little as she became aware of the entrance of a wonderfully graceful woman, exquisitely dressed, into the room. "Madam," said Dr. Rackstraw, "this young lady—the daughter of an old friend—is willing to take the post of your Majesty's secretary. You could not do better than accept her services, if I may venture to advise."

"Indeed?" asked Her Majesty, with a gracious smile that made Sophy feel as if the sun had suddenly begun to shine. This a savage, indeed? Sophy, always impressed by the nature of the moment, seemed to feel her heart drawn to the lady, scarcely older than herself, who had such a voice and such a smile. "She will be an admirable secretary, no doubt—but if she means to answer all my letters, she will have to work hard. Two hundred and seventeen letters, printed and written, all in one day! Well—I shall have two secretaries: this young lady, and the fire: and I think the fire will have the most to do. How many wine

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merchants are there in London, Dr. Rackstraw? I shall have an advertisement, that I drink only lemonade. Pray sit down. Oh, what an evening last night! I am tired."

"I thought you would be pleased."

"Pleased? I was not pleased. In my country, we meet to rest, and to amuse ourselves: we sit down always, and all do just what we please. With you we had to stand and talk—talk—talk: my head aches still. How can one talk with nothing to say? And you all had nothing to say, except ask stupid questions—which is rude. I am not going again to a company like that. I do not like my head to ache, or to breathe and smell—pah! Would you mind leaving me a few minutes with this young lady alone?"

Dr. Rackstraw bowed, and retired, with a glance towards Sophy to give her courage.

"What is your name?" asked the Queen.

"My name?" stammered Sophy. "Oh—Gray: Sophia Gray.'

"Sophia—Sophy?" asked the Queen, starting.

"Sophy is the short for Sophia, Madam."

"I know. I will call you Sophy, then, Miss Gray. I like the name," she said, with a deep sigh. "And I like you. You are not like those horrible women I saw last night. And mind, I don't engage you on Dr. Rackstraw's word. I engage you because—because I please. I shall not be a troublesome mistress, Miss Gray. Give me your hand."

Sophy touched the beautiful hand, and bent her lips over it, remembering that its beauty was a Queen's.

"No—not my hand!" cried Her Majesty. "I like you—I want you to like me. Kiss my lips—"

And before Sophy could frame a wondering thought, the impulsive Savage had thrown her arms round her neck, and her cheek was wet with tears that were not her own.

(To be continued.)

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NATIONAL EDUCATION—

ITS OBJECTS AND LIMITS: AN ECONOMICAL SURVEY.

EDUCATION has come so much to be looked upon as a universal panacea for social ills that we are in some danger of falling into an educational craze, both as to the extent to which education should be promoted by the State, and that to which it should be fomented by private beneficence.

It appears to me that the public is disposed to place too high a value upon private bequests for benevolent purposes generally. When a testator leaves property to be applied for ever to some purpose which he deems will be for the public advantage, he takes upon himself to judge of the needs of posterity for a long time, and his judgment is as likely as not to be a mistaken one. Thus, by a succession of such bequests much property is liable to be locked up in connection with objects which have either ceased to be serviceable, if they ever were so, or which, owing to the peculiar dispositions of the testator, are not promoted to the best advantage. To discuss this subject fully, however, would take us beyond the bounds of the present inquiry.[1]

The State being always a living authority, the question of the over-promotion of education can be discussed with relation to it without any disturbing element, and the principles thus deduced will accordingly apply also to private beneficence.

Now I apprehend that educational reformers of the type of Mr. Chamberlain or Mr. Mundella are carrying the notion of State aid to education and of State organization of education to excess.

Although in the ensuing discussion, I have taken the "Radical" as the type of the advanced reformer, I do not purpose to confine myself to the views of any particular authority, but to indicate generally the line of demarcation between practical and over sanguine projects. Some of the views I have attributed to the Radical are not logically consistent with Radical principles, but all Radicals are not logical.

That which it is desirable to have, and which the State ought to promote, in as far as its interposition is necessary for securing it, is a thorough and pervasive system of elementary education, a system of secondary education, adequate to meet the spontaneous demand with a supply of the most comprehensive kind, and of the

[1] See an examination of it in "The Economy of Consumption," part ii, book 2, chap. iii.

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highest quality, and a system of higher education adequate to meet the spontaneous demand in a similar manner, and to a certain extent, which will be afterwards indicated, to go beyond it.

These requirements go much beyond what competition is ever likely to do for education. They are difficult to reach even with State aid, so that any attempt to exceed them is only likely to be attended with the greater failure, in proportion to the degree of its ambition. State aid, moreover, is indispensable to their accomplishment, as they can never be otherwise than partially, inadequately, and inartistically dealt with, by private benefaction. On the other hand no greater calamity could befall a country in relation to its education than that it should fall entirely under the control of a State system.

State management, however free may be the institutions by which it is directed, has always something wooden and mechanical about it. It is impossible that it can enter into all the ramifications of social needs.

It is not, therefore, desirable that competition, even of the most private kind, should be banished from education. Still less is it desirable that private organization should be discouraged, except by the open and equal competition of the State organization. The jealousy of sectarian education is liable to be carried too far. The sects of a country represent the natural varieties of its national life. Sectarian organization has not proved adequate to the requirements of national education, but it has done something to promote it when it was otherwise neglected, and it is not desirable that it should be crushed by the mechanical uniformity of a State system, which can escape differences only by ignoring critical inquiries. It is sufficient if the free competition of a national system checks its tendency to narrowness.

The requirements of an elementary system present the first point on which our more zealous reformers appear liable to go astray.

Great as the importance of education is, there is somewhat of a tendency at the present day to over-rate mere scholastic training, which is by no means the whole of education. Before the art of printing was invented, kings, heroes, and statesmen have figured on the stage of the world who knew not how to read. Even since literature has been generally diffused amongst the higher ranks of society, men who have failed to acquire even its most elementary forms, have risen by the force of genius and practical education, to commanding positions in civilized life. Pizarro, the conqueror of Peru, was an illiterate man of illegitimate birth, yet he commanded the respectful obedience of men of education and aristocratic lineage. Much more common has it been for men whose scholastic training has been neglected to give themselves a literary training such as has enabled them to command the best learning of their day.

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To teach a man to read is to put into his hands an instrument of indefinite power, and the weakness of a State system of education is, that it is apt to be vague and aimless on the very point where the sectarian system, however defective or faulty may be its aims, is sure, at all events, to be definite and precise, the direction in which this power ought to be used.

But it is in regard to quantity rather than to direction that I wish to utter a warning against the overflow of reforming zeal. Radicalism, the amiable side of which is shown in its solicitude for the universal diffusion of education, seems about to exert itself upon this subject with an energy which, if not controlled, will produce very serious and inconvenient, as well as wholly unanticipated results.

To educate a man for the station in life he is likely to occupy may seem an utterly dull and prosaic standard to the exalted imagination which sees a statesman in the son of a labourer, but it is the only practical standard which a general scheme of education will admit of.

As a mere matter of arithmetic, it must be admitted by the stoutest Radical that all men cannot be statesmen, divines, scholars, rhetoricians, eminent scientific investigators, commercial magnates, or even local leaders of advanced political opinion. But the chink at which the thin edge of the wedge that is to split up sound educational organization is to be introduced, is that of giving all men, as far as possible, equal opportunities of future distinction.

That the elementary system of education should be so closely linked with the secondary, and the secondary with the higher, as that there should be between them no unfilled gap, such as extraordinary resources or extraordinary exertions would be needed to bridge, is a principle of sound organization. But the question is, should there be any, and if any, what degree of assistance given to individuals, in the way of State patronage, or eleemosynary aid, to enable them to pass from one class to the other?

I have answered this question by anticipation, in saying that secondary education ought to be provided in conformity with the spontaneous demand.

Although we have rendered elementary education compulsory, we have not yet got the length of making it gratuitous. Some reasons might be urged in favour of doing this for elementary education alone. What all have to be provided with alike might be paid for out of a common fund. But there is a difficulty in distinguishing what is elementary education. The children of the poor cannot be expected to give either so many hours a day, or so many years altogether to scholastic training as the children of those who are in comparatively easy circumstances. To pay for all would thus be to give most to those who least require it.

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seems, therefore, more convenient and equitable to leave the cost of defraying education, unless in the case of actual inability to meet it, to those who take advantage of it. The reasons for this course are necessarily much stronger in the case of higher education, which can never be acquired by more than a comparatively small minority. It would seem peculiarly repugnant to Radical notions to give special advantages at the common cost. Yet this is the course to which Radical theories seem likely to commit us.

Your Radical reformer has no objection, apparently, to make a man a prince, provided he finds him in the gutter, and it seems a grand principle to say, "Let every man, even in the lowest position, be able to aspire to the highest, provided he has ability to fill it."

Festina lente, however, is an excellent maxim, even to apply to the subversion of the existing order of society. Before you raise your man from the bottom, be sure you have a place at the top to put him in.

No amount of education, it is evident, can ever raise the mass of the people above the necessity of manual labour, and neither does the condition of the manual labourer require, nor do his circumstances admit of his receiving more than an elementary scholastic training.[1] If there is anything in him to develop, he may develop it afterwards on this basis, but the basis cannot be extended speculatively to meet the contingencies of individual capacity.

If elementary education is rendered compulsory, enough is exacted of the guardians of the young. More, it would be impossible for any general law to enforce. What cannot be done generally by individual exertion under State compulsion, could scarcely be effected by the direct intervention of the State. Free education could only be made higher than education at the expense of the parent or guardian, by levying heavier contributions on the whole people. No contrivance can thus render a higher standard of scholastic training than the elementary one obligatory.

But ought the State not to provide encouragement for the most successful students of the lower ranks to pass from one grade of learning to another, until, if their ability entitles them to it, they reach the highest; or, failing State aid, might not private beneficence be most advantageously exercised in promoting education in this direction? In other words, ought free or eleemosynary secondary education to be provided for the lower classes?

To answer this question, we must ask, what positions are the

[1] To the higher class of manual labourers, or artisans, development of education in the technical is far more important than in the purely scholastic direction. I do not deal here with the question how far State encouragement should be given to technical or to utilitarian art training. I apprehend, however, that the same principle would apply to it, as is applied to secondary education in the text.

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scholars thus trained to occupy? If it is answered, "they may prepare themselves for positions in middle-class life, or they may enter the learned professions," then, it must be asked, "to what end, or for what purpose, beneficial to themselves or to society, should they do so?"

If the education of the lower classes is to be stimulated for such purposes, we shall find our educational policy inevitably involved in the meshes of an economical fallacy.

Secondary education, which stands between the primary and the higher, has a special character which distinguishes it from both, as needing neither compulsion, like the primary, nor external support, like the higher education. Its character is essentially utilitarian. Primary education gives undefined opportunities; secondary education aims at accomplishing specific practical objects; the higher education not only rises to the limits of the utilitarian scheme, but passes beyond them, and thus, in addition to a characteristic common to it with the secondary education, it has a characteristic peculiar to itself.

The secondary education being thus wholly merged in the utilitarian scheme, it has this advantage over both the higher and lower grades that it is adequate to its own support.

Elementary education has to be pressed upon a class which either is not, or is always in danger of falling into a position in which it is not capable of appreciating its advantages. The higher education has tasks before it which are liable to remain long unappreciated except by individuals whose resources are unequal to their accomplishment.

Secondary education, on the other hand, aims at the acquisition of positions in society in which work is to be done of which the necessity is fully appreciated, and for which adequate remuneration is assured.

There is thus a mercantile demand for the recipients of secondary education, which is certain to call forth an adequate supply of them. The quarters from which the supply of scholars is sure to come in abundance are those who can afford to pay for education, namely the upper and middle classes. Accordingly secondary education stands in need of no pecuniary assistance from the State, and if the State concerns itself with it, it ought to be made a self-supporting branch of its arrangements. What the State can do for secondary education, is by organization and liberal advances for necessary equipment to provide a supply more ample and higher in quality, and possibly more economical in outlay than could be provided by private enterprise, and to place it in more complete harmony with the State arrangements for elementary and higher education.

But the demand for a practical education of a superior class is necessarily limited. There are only a certain number of superior positions in society to be occupied. All men cannot be clergymen,

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lawyers, physicians, writers of popular literature, or directors of scientific or mercantile enterprises. If too many men are trained for such posts, not only will many, and not always the least competent, be disappointed of obtaining them, but those who do attain them will find their remuneration painfully curtailed by over-competition. As the middle and upper classes to whom all the practical professions belong are able amply to supply all the candidates needed for filling vacancies in these professions, and as the majority of those who go from the higher schools to the universities are practical students merely, any system of fomentation either of elementary into second class or second class into university students is wholly unnecessary, and being unnecessary is manifestly injurious. It can serve only to create a supply of miserable aspirants to a position they can never attain, or to exclude the natural supply through the pre-occupation of its channels by an irregular and artificial supply. The notion of fomenting the supply of practical education of the higher grades, however it may accord with a generally restricted supply of education, is economically incompatible with the general diffusion of education.

But, it will be said, is it not for the interest of society that special talent, in whatsoever rank it appears, should be encouraged to rise to its proper level? What a loss, it may be imagined, to the world, if some great genius should be unknown, because uneducated and undeveloped!

Now, in the first place, elementary education gives the possibilities of unlimited training to those who possess it. If instead of training indefinite members for positions which they are not to occupy, we give all the opportunity to train themselves according to their own taste in their own leisure, there is ground for reasonable hope that great natural genius will not be lost, but that it will, as heretofore, find some way of breaking through the trammels of circumstances, and manifesting itself in its proper form.

But, secondly, it is far too high a price to pay, even to avoid the risk of losing some accidental display of genius, to perpetually disturb and over-fill the channels of supply for the higher professions. More genius will be crushed in this way than will be raised by any attainable enlargement of the area of selection.

It is in regard to this enlargement that the main illusion is entertained, and although it is a favourite dream of Radicals, it is older even than Radicalism.

The notion that there is a vast difference in the original capacity of different human beings is a singular corollary to the creed of a Radical reformer, yet it is upon this notion that the assumption of the importance of an extended area of competition for higher education necessarily rests.

Differences of actual capacity among fully developed individuals may be traced to three sources: difference in aggregate amount

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of original capacity; differences in distribution of original capacity; differences in training and experience.

By far the larger proportion of actual differences are due to the combinations of the last two causes, leaving only a very moderate proportion to mere original inequality of intellectual endowment. For all the ordinary work of life, the average intellect, well trained, is adequate; and where there is an actual preponderance of brain power, it is sure, in any sphere of life, to assert itself.

The aggregate individual endowment of men probably varies much less than is commonly believed, and when the average endowment of a mass so large as the upper classes of society is taken, it cannot be supposed, unless under specially disadvantageous circumstances, to be much inferior to the average endowment of society as a whole. No special advantage is thus gained, by the mere expansion of the area of competition. What is really important is not so much that this or that individual should be preferred, as that the individuals selected should be trained according to the natural distribution of their capacities. If it is supposed that the working-classes contain in themselves some inherent elements absent from the others, it must be remembered that the ranks of the middle-class are constantly being recruited from the most select portion of the working-classes, by the ordinary process of industrial competition, so that any attempt to force up an additional stratum of them, into the classes above by artificial educational stimuli, wears all the appearance of supererogatory work. Radical reformers may, therefore, I think, take a hint from a recent comic opera, and be entreated not to view with low-born disdain the upper (and middle) classes. There is really no ground for supposing that even the nobility are inferior in average intellectual endowment to the working-classes.

The process of scholastic competition itself, especially in the earlier stages of education, is of very small value as a test of merit. On the other hand, it is surely a great advantage that a scholar should have the social training of a gentleman. Plebeian scholarship is a crude anticipation of the process by which the various ranks of society intermingle in the course of generations, and it exposes those who are subjected to the premature process of hoisting to the risk of doing many absurdities and suffering many humiliations.

Anything like fomentation of the supply of students for higher education by the application of large pecuniary rewards, in the form of scholarships, either in primary or secondary schools, is thus entirely needless. Exceptional cases may be dealt with exceptionally, and individual liberality is probably the best resource for dealing with them; but any system of artificial promotion of scholarship by pecuniary aid is unsound in principle, and is sure in practice to be injurious.

It only remains to add that on the same principle scholarships

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in universities have a useful function only where they tend to promote investigations or acquirements for which there is not a remunerative demand. In so far as they serve only to stock paying professions, they are a mere interference with the natural supply.

ROBERT SCOTT MOFFAT.

LA FEMME À PARIS.

"C'est à Paris qu'il faut étudier la femme."—De Fontenay.

THE secret of that city's charm
Hath never yet been stated
By those who thence to desk or farm
Return, with pleasure sated.
Of life's delight a little space
They drink the perfect essence;
But do they such perfection trace
To woman's constant presence?

'Tis felt if *salons* are explored:
Thence fingers, brightly jewelled,
Have oil of peace on empires poured,
Or fires of war have fuelled.
Blown off is by a trembling fan
A ministerial crisis;
And, while four eyes an album scan,
Forced diplomatic ice is.

'Tis seen by who *ateliers* view,
These woman points and pinches,
And paints and plasters, and goes through
Work worthy twice her inches.
At "Bon Marchés," or great or small,
The male thing less and less is—
See "À Madame" inscribed on all
Bills, labels, cards, addresses!

Aux halles the Paris food supply
Has women for its keepers;
And Paris streets are clean and dry
Through care of female sweepers.
Art, Business, Trade, the State, the Church,
Are ruled by cunning fairies.
Cherchez la femme—no need to search,
For women everywhere is.

C. C. R.

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SILVERMEAD.

Chapter VII.

The truth was that this unexpected absence of Lady Susan rather frightened Brudenell. He did not know he was frightened, but still he was so. He had unconsciously been relying upon the Marquis of Caulfield's daughter as a sort of safe-guard to his conduct and protection against his own feelings, while mentally calling her rather an incubus, if not, under present circumstances, even a bore. In the early stages of love a man's passion increases in a way that quite staggers him at each new meeting with the girl who has bewitched him. Absence, of course, also adds to it greatly but gradually. Even Horace had no idea how beautiful, how perfectly lovely, he thought Miss Harding until to-night. The fact was her real beauties were growing upon him, while to the faults of her face he was becoming used, nay, he was getting to love them, and call them beauties too. Then there was Acton. Miss Camilla had been very nice, as lovers call it, to Horace, but there was nothing in her conduct incompatible with that odious Miss Laffinch's tale of her caring for Mr. Acton. The heartache is, I believe, the jocular name for love. Well, young Brudenell had to-night not a merely figurative or moral pain in that region, but a real, positive, physical sensation very like aching on the left side of the chest.

"I wonder what they are about now," he said, and he too sought the ball-room.

There was Camilla, whirling away with his friend Forbes. Well, that was bearable; he didn't mind Jack so much. Acton was, he thought, rather ostentatiously "sitting out," as it is called, and seemed to be watching her, though not rudely, of course. But from the very first there was something—what shall I say?—galling, offensive to Horace, that seemed to him more than irreverential, in the way Acton allowed himself to look at Miss Harding. Toned down, as it could not fail to be by the stringent laws of good manners, and the offender's habits of refined society, yet there was a quality—a boldness—in the glance, which Horace would have detested even if he had not felt personally attracted by the lady in question; and the fact of its being but slightly indicated, instead of vulgarly expressed, only added to our hero's indignation. Determined not to be like him in any-

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thing, and believing, rightly, I think, that few girls appreciate idle sighing, Brudenell sought a partner.

"I'll have the ugliest girl in the room," he said, grimly; "I'll have the pleasure of pleasing somebody, if not myself. No one enjoys a dance like a plain, unnoticed girl who seldom gets asked, at least by such a fellow and such a dancer as I am." You see he was talking in strict confidence to himself, and probably young men don't mind a little conceit then. So he chose Miss Sarah, the gawky daughter of their vicar at Massing, who fully illustrated his meaning. She simply beamed with happiness, and remembered and talked of that dance for many a long day afterwards.

If it had been only a square dance, the compliment would have delighted her, but a waltz, Oh! and to be chosen before any one else in the room! Oh! oh! and by the nicest young man in the whole county. Oh! oh! oh!

The dance over, Brudenell felt some of that soothing complacency which always follows a good action, and, alas! robs it of so much of its merit. He danced the quadrille with Lady Fouroaks and whiled away the time between that dance and the lancers by doing the agreeable to her ladyship's large and slightly boisterous party.

At length the moment came, as all moments have a way of doing. Nothing worth noting happened during the various figures of that unaccountably popular dance. A waltz or gallop, even a polka you may dance; you can talk out a quadrille with but few interruptions, but in the lancers, dancing and talking are alike delusions and snares. There is happily an ever-growing custom, now much in favour, which consists in the lady saying to her partner when he leads her out, supposing that is, that they are tolerably acquainted:

"If you don't mind, I had so much rather sit and talk this dance—you are sure you don't care? Thanks. Where shall we go? The staircase is coolest. Come along." If the man is a bad performer he may feel wounded, but generally speaking he is grateful. It is an excellent plan for the girl, such an economy in skirts! They do say, too, that many a hesitating wooer has been brought to the point by it. It may be so. I can only say "Try it," either to avoid revolving in a crush, or to escape a stupid square dance! Horace and his partner, however, had executed their lancer figures with exemplary precision, and were now too anxious to waltz with one another to dream of shirking the coming ecstasy, accordingly they only strolled round the set of smaller rooms during the few minutes' interval they had to fill up.

"So you never met Mr. Acton before?" said Lilla.

"Never."

"I am sure you will like him, he is so very nice," pursued she, innocently.

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"Well, I don't know," and Horace thought, "Has she no better way of entertaining me than praising up that fellow Acton."

"You don't think you shall?" said Camilla.

"Oh, I am sorry. But how can you tell at first sight? I believe in love at first sight, but not in one man dispassionately reading another all in a moment."

"One may dislike without reading."

"I do not understand."

"One may have heard things."

"I am sure," put in Lilla, with some heat, "if you have heard anything against Mr. Acton it was false."

"She does care for him, confound him," said Horace to himself. Then, aloud, "I see you will listen to no word against him."

"Why should I? He is my friend, and—and——"

"Pray do not trouble to explain," said Horace, trying desperately to appear cold, but fairly trembling all over.

"Do not mistake me, Mr. Brudenell. Believe me, it is my sense of justice alone that —— "

"But I have heard nothing against your friend."

"But I thought you said ——"

"That what I had heard made me dislike him."

"Yet it was not to his disparagement?"

"On the contrary, to his glory, to his immense credit and glory."

"Oh, Mr. Brudenell, I little thought you were one—I cannot believe it—one to give way to unworthy feelings, feelings of envy, of repining at another's grand and noble qualities," and a look of real pain came over the girl's face.

"And pray why not? Why have I not a right to be as bad as I please?"

For the instant he was sure she did not love him, yet finding he could move her so, he sought consolation in exercising his power. It was better than nothing.

"Because," replied Lilla, "because you could be so good."

"Good! It is the last accusation that was ever brought against me."

"Do not scorn the epithet. Remember anybody—every convict—can be bad; but to be good is so difficult."

"You do not mean to say you find it so?"

She turned full upon him, her lips parted to speak. Then she checked herself, and said: "If you only knew."

And unaccountably Horace's thoughts went to her father. There was a pause, and they sat down. Presently Horace said:

"If I only thought you cared ever so little whether I was good." In an almost inaudible tone, her eyes on her fan, she murmured, very seriously:

"I do care."

"Well," he said, "I do not think my feeling against Mr. Acton was unworthy, under the circumstances."

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Again she said :

"I do not understand."

"What I had heard, been assured of, made me furiously jealous of him."

"Jealous! But for that you, you must care for some one," and her young face betrayed the deepest concern; "and you must think not only that he, but she, the girl or woman he—Oh, won't you tell me more? You would if you knew——"

There was no semblance of a blush, but still the same pale, rather scared look. It was indeed so pronounced that the young man asked himself if she were not acting.

"Perhaps," she added, "you do not mean jealous in love?"

"That is just what I do mean."

"Then you——"

"Oh, Miss Harding, if I had any pride I could not, after what I have heard, I could not tell you that—and yet I thought I was so proud. Even as a child they said it would be my bane. I have seen you but three times, but have you not already discovered that——?"

"Hush!" said Lilla. But her lover could not tell whether she meant the exclamation to stop him in any case, or whether it was caused by the entrance of two individuals whom he had not seen. These were no other than the little doctor, McFinn, and his protégé, the boiled asparagus. With tipsy pertinacity, the Hibernian had been pursuing his intended introduction ever since Brudenell overheard his audacious design planned forth at the buffet, the mealy young man being a mere fly in the claws of a spider. Here, at length, was the long sought opportunity.

"And how are ye, Miss Harding, anyway? It's centuries I've been lucking for yer. And how is her dear ladyship this night?"

He had taken her hand, and stood pressing it like some forgotten object he might be unconsciously playing with.

"You know, Doctor McFinn, that I do not come from home. Lady Prendergast wrote this morning in her usual spirits," and now, by a well-timed jerk, Camilla extricated her hand.

Here the little man, after bowing to Brudenell, whom he had met at Massing, stepped back, and seizing the poor young cad, his friend, who had hitherto been hiding behind him, a picture of awkwardness—seizing him by the shoulder, he hauled him up, and said, "Allow me to introduce me very particklar friend Mr. Tacitus Webley, a splendid dancer, and a cousin of Lord Lochmahoney. Is it the next dance you'll be givin' him, Miss?" Lilla had not yet acquired the art of snubbing. How a London belle of a few seasons pities the *débutante* for not knowing how not to dance with the wrong sort of men! Of course, until what are called the "ropes" are learnt, every one is victimised more or less; but, later on, there is nothing wherein a girl's good or bad breeding becomes more

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apparent than in the way in which she succeeds in dancing only with such partners as she wishes to dance with.

Your second-rate girl clumsily puts herself in the wrong. She has no real delicacy or self-respect, so thinks it very fine to imitate Lady Suprema Voltier in not dancing with little Shuffleround. But note the different *modus operandi*, for her ladyship happens to be one of the right sort.

Miss Cocktail—to borrow the nomenclature of the turf—begins by formally accepting Mr. Shuffleround for waltz, say number five, and as she has not so many partners as she could desire, really means to stand up with him if she gets no more eligible offer. Mr. Shuffleround, who has perhaps refrained from going on to another ball on account of this very waltz, for he has some *savoir vivre*, though he cannot dance, comes up at the appointed time to claim it. Miss Cocktail says:

"Oh, I'm engaged for this."

"I think," says Mr. Shuffleround, "if you'll kindly consult your card, you will find it is to me."

"Oh, I have promised this to Lord Ritch. I suppose I must have made a mistake."

"Well, then," falters Mr. Shuffleround, meaning that now is the time to rectify it, for he saw his lordship make his *entrée* not ten minutes ago. But even as he speaks, Miss Cocktail coolly glides her hand into the young earl's proffered arm, and leaves the jilted one standing there without further ceremony. Probably several people have witnessed the little scene, which does not improve matters for Shuffleround. Everybody knows that Lord Ritch is one of the finest movers in London, and a good deal else besides, which poor Mr. Shuffleround is not.

Now observe. Shuffleround had also tried to secure a dance from Lady Suprema; but with infinite tact she had avoided giving either what he wanted or the slightest offence. There are various ways of doing this. To start with, if there be disinclination on the part of young ladies generally to dance with a certain man, this is, of course, founded on certain reasons. Well, the man must be himself aware of these, or else he is a fool, and being such he seeks suffering; knowing them, he should show a becoming diffidence. In a word, if Lady Suprema snubs either man or woman, you may safely say that they compel her to do it with their eyes wide open, and are entitled to no quarter.

Society has made certain rules for itself, as long as people observe which, no individual can force another to choose between being rude and doing something they do not wish to do, although ill-bred people are for ever trying to force those above them into one of these two alternatives. Thus Lady Suprema tells little Shuffleround—adhering as nearly to the truth as may be—either that she does not know how long she will be able to stay, or being rather tired would rather not engage herself beforehand, or that

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she is already rather confused as to whom she is engaged to, or, remembering how Shuffleround waltzes, she accords him only a square dance, and so forth.

But even if she for once took such a course as Miss Cocktail, how differently would she manage it! As soon as Lord Ritch asked her, she would send for or find Mr. Shuffleround, apologise to him for her stupidity, say that he would do her a great favour, and get her out of a tiresome dilemma, if he would accept the dance before or the dance after; even that she had something particular to talk of with Lord Ritch, who could not stay, or fifty other things which the right sort of woman always has sufficient mother-wit to think of. If, however, little Shuffleround is bear enough to say, "I value the privilege of dancing with you too much to give it up," it is then he, and not Lady Suprema, who becomes responsible for his discomfiture, which naturally follows, as it is needless to add that Lord Ritch is to have the dance in any case.

There was a strong instance of the Nemesis which follows fortuitous rudeness only quite recently at a ball in Mayfair.

A certain baronet, not very rich, but whom the Miss Cocktail in question would have given one of her eyes to secure, had really taken a strong fancy to her, and after due consideration, he fully made up his mind to propose. When, lo! Miss Cocktail, unaware alike of his intentions or his vicinity, enacted, almost at his elbow, just such a scene as the one described between her, Mr. Shuffleround and Lord Ritch. How little did she dream that all in a moment, and for the sake of a waltz with a crack partner, she lost a husband—a chance of marrying such as she will never find again.

The baronet changed colour, and merely saying to himself, "No, I will never wed a snob at heart," dismissed Miss Cocktail from his thoughts from that moment.

But to return to Miss Harding. She knew nothing, it is true, of all these little finesses—of how to have her own way, while wounding nobody; but she, at least, knew her ignorance. She knew that one of her race must not be underbred, and would rather have figured with every snob in the room, and there were plenty here to-night, than sin in the other direction by unduly wounding anyone.

Notwithstanding the doctor's flourish about the asparagus' dancing powers, Camilla, all inexperienced as she was, intuitively felt misgivings there anent, and finally compromised matters for a quadrille. The long expected waltz for her and Horace now struck joyfully upon their ears, and off they tripped once more to the ball-room.

There is, I think, something very pathetic—all reservations made on the score of conventionality and the gas-lit crowd in which it takes place—something really pathetic, I say, in a young

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man's arm first encircling for a waltz the waist of the girl he loves, and hopes, however vaguely, to make his wife. He feels a mingled appreciation and reverence, as he entwines her, which he will never forget, even if he lives to be ninety.

What though a hundred thoughtless and irreverent arms, kept in order by worldly fear, have clasped that waist before! It is none the less sacred to him. And she, the girl? If she has already begun to care for him, or even to know that she is above other women in his eyes, does she not divine very nearly what is passing in his mind? A slight and involuntary thrill runs through her as they move off, but almost imperceptible as it is, yet he feels it and thrills back:

"O joys of youth! O joys of youth!"

But little was said and much felt during that waltz; and Brudenell told himself as it ended that Camilla was sweet to that degree that moss-roses, violets and sweet-briar were nowhere in the race with her. He had even visions of a cabin by some distant sea, and what more impossible chimeras I know not; but he ended with this rather odd self-communing:

"No, I shall never—mind, *never*, I am quite sure of that—care to take any other woman to my heart. But is such ecstatic love after all the end and aim of life? Is any such rapture worth the forfeiting of position, the peace of one's relations, the wealth of one's children? No. They may possibly be combined; if so, I will marry Miss Harding; but, if I must choose between these things and her, I will not marry her. Only adieu, then, to love—or anything like it—for Horace Brudenell in this world! He must become the man of sterner ambitions, of more generally useful, if less gentle, pursuits."

And when he had told himself thus much, he morally patted himself on the back for having his warmest feelings so well in hand. He thought it highly wise and creditable in so young a man to be so clear-sighted, so unbiassed, so well able to weigh the pros and cons of his position, and steer his course with a firm hand, even amid the distracting billows of admiration, jealousy and passion: "Let him who thinks himself secure, tremble lest he fall."

So that was all this clever young man knew about himself or the matter in hand. Well, a man who is incapable of being turned into a perfectly helpless simpleton by beauty—at least once in his life—is no man, because he does not to the full appreciate beauty, grace, charm, helplessness, *esprit*, in fine, all that goes to make up a really irresistible woman.

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Chapter VIII.

Horace was now ordered to take a sister of Lady Fouroaks—a young widow—down to supper; I mean up, for the exigences of the Town hall required an ascent. This Mrs. Preakness deserved her reputation of being very good fun, rather too much of the rattletrap order, perhaps, but still very pleasant, and just the woman to sweep the cobwebs out of your brain with a couple of sentences and a peal of laughter. The two would doubtless have greatly enjoyed their repast, for the supper had been going on nearly an hour, and there was no longer any crowd—every body, some forty in number, being, at this moment, able to sit down—but for the fact that Miss Harding and her cavalier were at the other end of the table, quite in sight, but out of earshot, that they seemed far more engrossed in conversing than in eating, and that the gentleman's name was Acton. Horace wished Mrs. Preakness anywhere but by his side; yet even had a fairy whisked her away, how would that have benefited him, since he could not go and disturb the couple whose perfectly correct proceeding so acutely annoyed him? But there was something more. He had obtained Lilla's willing consent to give him the first waltz after supper. Now, she seemed to him to have forgotten everything in the world except the individual she was conversing with, and had not once cast a glance towards the other end of the table. Therefore, Horace told himself that if Mrs. Preakness, who appeared both hungry and thirsty, should dawdle unduly over the little banquet, and, naturally, he could not hurry her, a ready excuse would be furnished to Miss Harding, in his unavoidable absence, for transferring that waltz—and it is proverbially the dance of the evening—to his rival; even, that is, if Miss Camilla should condescend to remember the existence of poor Horace at all. Unable to swallow solid food under this trial, the young man, who, for all his boasted philosophy, was fairly love-sick, kept tossing off bumper after bumper of champagne in the endeavour to assuage his devouring thirst. He had one excuse, he knew it would not make him tipsy. His brain, if not his heart, was constitutionally difficult to upset. No amount of that honest but not powerful Sillery could have unsteadied his gait, however it might unloosen his tongue. His voluble companion kept up an unceasing flow of light nothings, which entailed the very meagrest response from him. Your inveterate talker is quite above being checked by such trifles as meat and drink, and so Horace was enabled, without seeming rude, to concentrate almost his entire attention upon the pair whose proceedings cost him such profoundly interesting pain.

As ill luck would have it, the topic, whatever it may have been, which Lilla and Acton had hitherto been so eagerly discussing,

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now came abruptly to an end, and Acton forthwith directed all his energies to criticising and ridiculing the decorations and arrangements of the supper table—things which, truth to tell, amply lent themselves to such a pursuit. He was a young man of quiet, undemonstrative ways, and, therefore, although you could see he was sneering and quizzing at something, it was exceedingly difficult to know what that something might be.

"Trifles light as air,
Are to the jealous confirmations strong
As proofs of Holy Writ."

Horace Brudenell, who saw those eyes he already hated directed boldly straight down the table in a line with him, who likewise saw his lips curl, and his whole face assume a look of amused contempt, who watched him slightly bend and carelessly drop some remarks to Miss Harding, which evidently amused both speaker and listener, Horace, I say, suddenly jumped to the rash and rather stupid conclusion that he—he, Horace Brudenell, was the object of this satire, the butt of young Acton's remarks. He was seized with sudden fury, and never so much as asked himself whether he might not be mistaken. We have seen that he plumed himself upon his coolness, his self-control, but such as remained to him under this supposed insult was all concentrated upon retaining his outward composure. However he may have deceived himself as to the power he exercised over his feelings—and are we not all dupes in this?—he could boast with truth that no outward act of his short life had been very rash. He was, besides, *de trop bonne vie* to do anything which might cause a row, at all events before ladies. Yet his anger burnt only the more fiercely for being smothered in decorum. As he anticipated, the pair he was watching presently rose, as with one accord and a light, joyous step, and sped from the room. He thought, too, that the lady took the proffered arm with a shade too much confidence and *abandon*. A moment later, an exceptionally intoxicating waltz struck clearly upon his ear. After that, even the gushing Mrs. Preakness, engrossed as she still was in her talk, herself, and her supper, could not but notice the change which had come over her companion.

"Good gracious!" she cried, "are you ill?"

"Ill! Oh, dear no; what makes you ask?"

"You look suddenly—I don't know what. And I declare you have had no supper!"

"I—I am not hungry. Pray do not mind me."

"But I do mind you, very much. It is the heat of the room? You are dead tired? No? Then what?"

"No, no, I am often pale and, and—absent in manner. Allow me to fill your glass?"

"But tell me—I quite forgot, you are no doubt engaged for

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this dance, and here am I, who don't dance, keeping you from your partner."

"Oh, never mind, no doubt she will console herself with someone else."

And as he said this there was a look—a bitterness that revealed to good-natured Mrs. Preakness, at least, part of the truth. She rose at once, and hurried Horace downstairs. As they reached the ball-room, who should be standing just inside, with their backs to the doorway, but Acton and Miss Harding.

"Now, don't mind me," said Mrs. Preakness, disengaging herself; "you know I want no cavalier," and she disappeared in the throng.

"No, no," Lilla was saying, with much emphasis; "I tell you I promised. I cannot, indeed, I cannot."

"But why?" urged Acton. "Why in the name of goodness, since he's not here?"

"But he may come."

"I declare to you, the widow will chain him this half hour. She is beginning all over again. As we got up from table she went back to the soup. Ha, ha, ha!"

Every word of this little dialogue Brudenell, of course, heard.

"I beg your pardon," he said, addressing the young man, his voice trembling in spite of him as he did so. Then, turning to Lilla: "I have the pleasure of being engaged to you for this dance."

"Yes," she said, quite simply, and with a friendly inclination of the head to Acton, who looked unmistakably disappointed she took Horace's arm with a serenity which made it impossible to divine whether she rejoiced in or regretted the exchange.

Well, he had got her; that much he had at least accomplished. She did not seem in the least tired, and danced as perfectly as ever, with that springy suppleness which, alas! endures but two or three years, sometimes only during a girl's first season.

But her partner was too perturbed, too miserable, to derive any pleasure even from dancing with his soul's ideal. You cannot enjoy a lovely view, or the beautiful in any shape unless the spirit is fairly at peace. A man may passionately enjoy pouring brandy down his throat, or pushing about golden piles upon the gambler's green cloth, but the things that are good and pure shall not delight him until, at least, some degree of calmness has been restored. Horace made but few pauses during this dance, because he hardly trusted himself to speak until he should have made up his mind what to say. Tell her much, that very night, he must and would; but the electricity was yet only accumulating throughout the cloud, it had still to find concentration and expression in the thunderbolt.

Camilla saw that he was strangely altered, and vainly sought the cause. She guessed him somewhat jealous of Acton, to be sure, but, considering that the latter had given him no possible cause of

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offence—that it was nothing more, in fact, than that ordinary feeling which one good-looking young man, when they both admire the same woman, has for another good-looking young man—she could not at all solve the mystery. Not liking to ask questions, she talked about the people around them; but Horace's answers were deplorable. She was beginning to wonder whether this puzzle would keep her awake long after she sought her pillow, when the dance came to an end. They took one turn round the room, arm in arm, and then, suddenly, the young man said, rather as if awakening from a dream:

"Would you mind coming and sitting with me in one of those rooms over there for a few minutes? I—I want to ask you about something."

"Mind? Not the least. It is much cooler and pleasanter."

So he led her in silence, and they picked out a retired nook for a chat. After they were seated, Horace cleared his throat, and said:

"Do not be offended with me," and then he paused.

"I am sure I shall not. Trust me."

"I must tell you, then, I had formed the—the very highest opinion of you."

He paused again, but this time she made no sign.

"I fancied," he pursued, "that you liked me—not much—but well enough, upon our short acquaintance, to hope that we might soon become friends."

"I like you very much, indeed," she said, low.

"And yet," he said, "when to-night a friend of yours behaved to me disgracefully——"

"A friend of mine?"

"Yes. Mr. Acton."

"How? What has he done?"

The candid surprise of this exclamation fairly staggered Brudenell; yet he went on to say:

"When he ventured to do so you joined in the laugh."

"You must be strangely mistaken. I am sure you are."

"I think not."

"Tell me more. When was this?"

"Do you mean to say, on your honour, that upstairs, just now, he was not turning me into ridicule?"

"I give you my word that your name was not even mentioned. No reference of any kind was ever made to you. I saw you come in with Mrs. Preakness and sit down, but you were so far off, I never thought of making any sign. Oh! you *do* believe me?"

"I must, since you give your word. But what, then, was the object of your sarcasm? It was evident you were both sneering at something."

"Of our—Oh, I remember now—ha, ha, ha! It shows how careful one should be! We were laughing over the highly provincial decorations of the table. That centre piece!"

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Horace felt small. Had he then been furious with a scarecrow, a creature of his fevered brain? No matter, he hated Acton, and went on:

"Even so. Mr. Acton had no right to urge you, as I could not help hearing him do, to give him the last waltz, after you expressly told him you were engaged to me."

Listen to these two talking! Can anything be more flat than their language, more petty and commonplace than their subject? Yet thus it is ever with lovers. Their converse is all looks, tones, and mesmerism, and the poor words get the worst of it. So whenever an author or dramatist puts fine things into the mouths of his love-makers we instinctively feel that it is not real!

"But," answered Camilla, "we had that moment left you in attendance on the lady you had taken to supper, and——"

"Oh, of course you defend him," broke out Horace, for once quite forgetting his manners.

"I defend all my friends when they are unjustly attacked," said Camilla, flushing up, for it pained her to see him rude.

Then he said, recklessly:

"Oh, of course, I am wrong throughout. Wrong upstairs, wrong about the waltz. Mr. Acton is a piece of perfection, and I'm a fool not to see it."

"But, you see, I would not give him the dance."

The tone in which she said this is indescribable. He shot a quick glance at her; he had been looking down, his elbows on his knees, to see if her face confirmed her tone, and said, quite gently,

"No, you didn't," and his look added, "bless you."

Now, whether Miss Harding was more of a woman already than anyone gave her credit for, and wanted Horace to propose to her that night, or whether she was still so much of a child as to give way to a childish impulse to break through conventionality, is a point which each one had better decide for himself, but, no sooner did their eyes meet, than she laid her little hand down on the back of her lover's, and said, with a whole world of tenderness:

"What is the matter?"

To Horace it was an electric shock.

"The matter?" he echoed, his whole face aflame; "do you not know that I love you—have loved you, adored you, from the first night we met?"

This was hardly true, but he believed it at the time.

So the fatal word was spoken—spoken without premeditation, spite of all his boasted prudence; wrung out of him literally by a *coup de main*.

She threw herself back with her head against the wall—they sat upon a very narrow uncomfortable rout seat—closed her eyes, and murmured,

"I am so glad."

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Then, looking to see that they were quite alone, he bent and kissed her cheek. The cheek blushed but she did not move, so he kissed the blush. It was done! When a man of the slightest honour tells a woman—at any rate a lady—that he loves her, he is as good or as bad as married to her if she wishes it.

Will it be believed that no idea that he had been *caught* ever entered Horace's head? His uncle, Lady Susan, his prospects, all, it is true, flashed before his mind's eye at this juncture, but all he felt was delight. He loved Camilla ten thousand times more ardently than two minutes before, and he revelled wildly in the double thought that she did love him, and therefore could not love his supposed rival Acton. Why, how ridiculous his fears had been. He felt at this moment that he could absolutely hug that misguided young man for his groundless and most harsh suspicions of him. He said:

"I feel we have now so many things to say, one hardly knows where to begin."

Miss Harding was bending forward now, with her eyes down; she said:

"Do you believe in presentiments?"

"In yours I do."

"Then I hope you are wrong, for I have a fear—a fear that there are all kinds of obstacles in our way."

"We will overcome them; but of what kind are they?"

"Some I can imagine, but there may come others of which neither of us dream, and they frighten me."

He pressed her hand.

"Great happiness," she said, with charming shyness, "is, they declare, always hard to believe in."

"But," he interrupted, "yours, if you are good enough to call it so, is nothing to compare with mine, and I have no fears."

"Men are so brave!"

Here one of those busy bodies who are always being sent to see after people—or else pretending that they are so—appeared upon the scene, to say Lady Fouroaks was assembling her forces previous to departure, that the omnibus was to start first, then the brougham, and last the landau.

"Thanks," said Miss Harding; "I am in the landau. Lady Fouroaks said we were all to go back as we came. I will come in a few minutes."

The ambassador slunk away. He felt snubbed, he did not know why.

"And when shall I see you again?" asked Brudenell, anxiously; "may I ride over to-morrow?"

"N—no," Camilla replied, with a little frightened look which puzzled him.

"Then when? But make it soon."

"I—I will write," she said; "I am almost afraid. Oh, it is not

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my fault," and she heaved a deep sigh, and an anxious look stole over her young face. "I shall be dying to see you again, you know it, do you not?"

"I hope it."

"You will have to believe everything I say in future;" this with a touch of playfulness. "But," and now she was grave again, "it is about gran'ma. She would see at once that we were not as we were. I—I—had better tell her."

"But, of course. I thought you would tell her to-morrow first thing."

She turned to him as though to declaim such an intention. Then said, very quietly:

"You don't know Lady Prendergast; oh, how much I have to explain to you. I will write it."

Here the busy body returned to say that the omnibus had started.

The lovers jumped up. They had forgotten him and his errand.

As Horace brought her down, he asked his new *fiancée*: "And when—when may I expect a letter? How I shall count the minutes till it comes!"

She pressed the arm she was taking.

"You shall hear the day after to-morrow—no, I forgot, I shall not get home to Silvermead in time. But, stay, it is now morning, so it is to-day I return. To-morrow will be Friday—Saturday morning you shall hear."

They had reached the crowd of departing guests. All was hurry and confusion. Acton had got Miss Harding's things, and now proceeded to put them on. It did not matter. Horace had ceased being jealous, for the time being at least. He stood by, and gave her his arm again to take her to the carriage.

"Good night," she whispered; "God bless you," oh, so tenderly.

And, watching his opportunity, he managed to whisper back:

"Good night, *my love*."

And she was gone.

True, the day had almost come.

The April morn; but lovers have no sympathy with sunlight, and these two preferred to keep up the fiction that it was yet night. How could they have said "Good morning," with any satisfaction or poetry?

Needless to tell that Brudenell danced no more. Not although Miss Larch cast a piteous glance at him as he passed. Why he returned to the ball-room at all he hardly knew. Perhaps to see how hideous it looked without his lady; though this was such a foregone conclusion as to be hardly worth the testing. But those who care to follow the ways and thoughts of lovers must be content to find them supremely strange, inconsistent and unaccountable.

In the delirium of fever one does not expect people to be

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rational. Another quarter of an hour saw Horace driving back to Massing through the grey dawn. He now set himself once more to analyse his feelings, even as he had done during his former drive. Horace, as we have seen, was much given to this practice; one which is occasionally, if not often, compatible with the strongest passions, the warmest natures, and is indeed a sort of counterpoise which Nature supplies to keep some few, at least, of her most ardent children within bounds. So that if our hero was not at this period of his career more sane than other lovers, he had, at all events, much method in his madness.

We will not, however, pry into his thoughts again on this occasion. Suffice it to say that while his heart prevented his regretting in any degree what he had done, his keen self-scrutiny yet made him arrive clearly enough at the conclusion, just as he drove in at his uncle's gates, that although, as has been emphatically said before, he had never, during the night, been noticeably under the influence of wine, yet had he happened to have drunk nothing but water, he would probably not have made his rather premature declaration to Miss Harding.

Chapter IX.

Sir Howard Brudenell was the last man you would care to keep waiting; if, that is, you had any wish to remain on his good books.

Young heads are heavy sleepers, and, as a rule, Horace loved his eight hours of bed when he had them to spare as well as most people of his age. But when love first invades the youthful breast food and sleep are the principal things that it discounts. I say first invades, but in many natures the phenomena are repeated as often as the malady returns. That old-fashioned idea, by-the-by, that if you can love more than once you never really love at all, is now, I believe, quite exploded. No, love is not any longer ranked among the diseases you can only have once, and therefore inoculation no more avails in its regard.

Horace slept little and feverishly after the ball, and, when called at eight o'clock to jump up immediately was rather a relief than otherwise. Accordingly at nine he found himself seated as usual opposite his prim and stately uncle at breakfast. Sir Howard despised curiosity as undignified, but for all that he felt a considerable degree of it exciting him this morning, only he strove to elevate the sensation by changing its name into legitimate interest, and even this he would not manifest by asking questions if he could make his nephew talk, and supply the information he desired without that process. But the latter was by no means in a humour to discourse of the events of the night; so after Sir Howard had abused the weather, which had turned rainy, and talked for some time about Mr. Branding, the agent, and various matters relating to the estate—things in which Horace exhibited to-day a strong

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but fictitious interest, in the hope of reducing discussion upon the ball at Hasham to the narrowest possible dimensions, Sir Howard said, looking considerately out of the window,

"Well, and you have told me nothing about the ball. How—how did you get on with Lady Susan?"

"Oh, none of the Caulfield party were there."

"Not there! Why Lady Caulfield told me herself——"

"I know, uncle, but news came of the death of some relation—only an old cousin of eighty, or somebody of that sort—any how they were not there."

"How very provoking!" said the uncle with feeling.

"Well, it can't be helped," replied the nephew, with beautiful resignation.

"Why, I declare, Horace, you seem quite pleased!"

"Eh!—I?"

"Yes. I believe you boys hate anything that prevents your flirting round with every pretty girl in the room, making as much love as you please to them all."

Sir Howard was really annoyed and irritated. He thought if Lady Susan was not there that Horace ought to deplore her absence, whether he cared personally for her or not.

"Oh, uncle!" said the latter, just to say something.

An event of the night before now recurred to Sir Howard's mind which he had made very light of at the time; first because it came from the unreliable Miss Laffinch, and then because he thought he had so tickled Horace's ambition on the score of the marquis' rich daughter as to render him impervious to the charms of what he called an insignificant little chit like Miss Harding.

When the rubber had broken up, and while the whisty old Colonel was helping himself to a final brandy-and-soda, Laffinch had whispered to Sir Howard—

"I know something."

"Yes?"

"I've found something out, and thought I'd give you the hint."

"You are very kind."

"Couldn't tell you the other night, because he was here."

"He—who?"

"Why, Master Horace, to be sure."

"What of him?" said the Baronet, coldly. Had this horrid old cat's omniscience already penetrated the Lady Susan's design, or what other plans had the old woman invented for interfering in his private affairs? She was all very well as a fourth at whist, when it was a question of having her or dummy; but in every other relation of life the Laffinch was to be kept at once at arm's length and in good humour.

"He's in love."

"I dare say," said Sir Howard indifferently, to disappoint her.

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"Shall I tell you who with?"

"I really don't care."

"Then I do," retorted the spinster, savagely, "for I think its a trap."

"A trap! what do you mean?"

"Aha! what I say. A trap, a trap, a trap," she snapped out, hammering on the successful word which had extorted a question from Sir Howard. Still he knew his interlocutor too well to "rise" much.

"Believe me you are mistaken," he said with all his wonted *hauteur*.

"Not I. I never am."

The Colonel had gone to bed, so now she spoke out.

"That Harding girl, you know, the daughter of that disreputable adventurer. That horrid, scheming old Lady Prendergast loves her grandchild wildly and would stick at nothing to get her married respectably. The little minx—obeying orders, no doubt—made a dead set at him the moment they met, so I am told."

"Indeed!"

"And you should have only seen the indecent way she marched him off to the conservatory the day I dined there."

"But you told me the other evening that she cared for someone else."

"For Acton, yes; he's the *amant de cœur*, but she knows Lord Hammersley will never consent. If she catches poor Horace though, you will see nice doings when she has become Mrs. Brudenell. She takes after her father. *Que voulez vous!* It's in the blood!"

"But--but——" said the now anxious uncle, moved in spite of himself, "What leads you to suppose that my nephew cares——"

"What leads me?" she asked, mocking his tone impudently, for she saw now that she held him, and it was her nature always to become insupportable when she could afford it, as it was also a part of her system.

"What leads me? My good Sir Howard, a few nights ago I sat alone with your nephew on this very sofa. I thought—for I have always taken a deep interest in your family—that I would just ascertain which way the wind blew. Accordingly I told him something of little Harding's *manège* with young Acton, of their more than compromising goings-on; in fact——well, you should have only seen him! The poor boy turned all colours, and positively went all of a shake."

"My dear lady. I really think you exaggerate—unintentionally of course, but——"

"Exaggerate! I? My dear Sir Howard, ask anybody. I am well known to be always under the mark."

This in a shrill tone of indignation.

"Are you?" scoffed her listener to himself. "It's probably

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only a trick of hers just to give herself importance." Then aloud,

"Well, well, my good friend, I am grateful for your kindly interest. I have reason to know, however, that if my nephew has, as you suppose, any fancy for Miss Harding, it is of the most transient nature."

"You would hardly say so if you had witnessed our very brief interview," persisted the lady unflinchingly. "His idea could be nothing less than marriage, for he was beginning to question me about that gambling father of the girl's when you and the Colonel came in from your wine."

"Well, well, I must see to it. I repeat, dear Miss Laffinch, that I thank you. Good night—good night."

And thus he had dismissed both his guest and the subject, but now that chance had prevented what Sir Howard not unreasonably considered a promising first move in his game; now, too, that Horace seemed so unnaturally serene under the disappointment of the Caulfield party's absence from the ball, the conversation of the night before assumed an importance he had not accorded to it before, and he told himself that Miss Laffinch's warning might really be worth consideration after all. At the same moment, Horace's question to himself, Sir Howard—as to whether Miss Harding was not a considerable heiress—came back to him full of significance. If nothing direct could now be done with Lady Susan for some days to come, Sir Howard told himself that he would at any rate indirectly further his scheme by clearing the road of all obstacles. While still hardly believing that such a little chit as that Harding girl could presume to stand in his august way, he would first of all find out the full truth about it, and should it turn out that she did so presume, he would ruthlessly and summarily sweep her out of it. All this passed through the baronet's mind in a very few seconds, and then he said—rather carelessly,

"And who were your partners last night?"

Horace was expecting a certain amount of catechising, so he didn't blush, but replied with a very good grace,

"O well, I danced away. Let me see—there was Miss Larch——"

"Miss Larch!" echoed his uncle with a mixture of slight surprise and contempt.

"Then you know one always has a lot of duty dances to get through. There were several of the Fouroaks party."

"Ah!" put in Sir Howard, approvingly.

"And then—let me see—you told me to mind and ask Miss Harding—you said I dined there the other day."

"Ah, so I did—I remember; so you danced with her?"

"Yes, uncle."

"How often?" and, as he fired this shot, he happened to look up from his egg straight into poor Horace's eyes.

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The question was utterly unexpected, for Horace had no reason to suppose his uncle knew aught of the state of his feelings with regard to this young lady. He felt himself blush and saw that his uncle noted it. He could not help looking down. He knew it was a mistake, but he did it.

"Let me see," he said, as if reflecting. "Oh to be sure!" and now he looked up again, "I danced with her twice." He really forgot the Lancers at the moment. "She is a pretty little girl, don't you think so?"

"Yes, I do; a very pretty little girl and really very pleasant."

"Now tell me, nephew," pursued Sir Howard (almost laughing) and so genially that he would have thrown a Talleyrand off his guard, "tell me—as a matter of taste—which do you personally most admire, the *mignon* charms of such a little girl as that, or the more imposing and Juno-like attraction of your Lady Susan?"

Horace fell into the trap at once. He thought it not impossible that his uncle was about to tell him that she whom he loved was also a great heiress, and that although no marquis' daughter her family was old, and that if his heart led him towards the less brilliant match, Sir Howard's ambition should not say him nay. Still, high as his heart beat at the thought, he knew his relative too well not to answer with some little caution.

"I will not deny," he said, "that I think there would, of the two, be more chance of my falling in love with Miss Harding."

"I thought so," put in the uncle.

"But tell me first, are you giving me my choice? Is Miss Harding also a match you would approve—is she, too, an heiress?"

"She is out of the question."

"Then why did you ask me?" and Horace's face fell wofully, as the other well observed, and there was something like impatience in the young man's tone as he put the question.

"My dear boy (this propitiatingly), merely as a matter of taste—as if there were a question of two pictures. Of course you have seen too little of either of the ladies for your heart to be touched by one or other of them. However, as we are on the subject, I may as well tell you that Miss Harding, as a match for any man, would be most objectionable."

"May I enquire why?"

"By all means, there is no secret in the matter. First then, her father (one Harding, whom I used to know in former days) is not only a spendthrift, a ruined gambler, but he is positively a defaulter. The fellow has been warned off Newmarket heath for not paying the heavy bets which he lost there and on other race courses."

"Very bad, very bad," said Horace, "no doubt; still it is hard that his daughter should be punished."

"Hard, nonsense. Does not the glory of a great general or statesman descend to his posterity? Why then, in common fair-

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ness, should not a man's bad actions bring discredit to his offspring?"

"Pardon me, uncle, you do not understand me. I admit that Miss Harding should suffer, but not to the extent of being doomed to single-blessedness. She will, I suppose, be some day very rich, and you will then see how many a man of good position will step forward to woo her."

"She rich?" cried Sir Howard in derision. "Who told you that tale?"

"I naturally imagined that at Lady Prendergast's death—— "

"She will be lucky if she gets two hundred a year."

Horace was so deeply interested at this point of the conversation that he forgot to act any longer, and the bitter disappointment he felt was clearly legible upon his anxious countenance.

The sharp Sir Howard's worst fears were thereby confirmed, and he determined more than ever to nip this romantic nonsense in the bud.

"As I have told you, Horace, you must marry money, if you marry at all; unless," he added, with a grim smile, "you and your wife are willing to live in a hut, and earn your wages as farm servants."

Here Horace, who inherited all the family pride, coloured up in anger, but he said nothing.

Sir Howard went on:

"The Silvermead estates are very large, but they are strictly entailed, and pass to a distant cousin—Lord Howden, a Scotchman—at Lady Prendergast's death. During her life she has so much of the income as remains, after paying some eight thousand a year as interest on the heavy mortgages with which the estates are encumbered, owing to debts contracted by the first baronet over a hundred years ago, and which none of his descendants have chosen, if they have been able, to pay off."

Horace's wrath, for want of a worthier object, here turned against the tipsy little doctor, Mc Finn, whose loose tongue had perhaps been responsible in some degree for what the young fellow could now but call his extreme rashness at the ball.

"As Lady Prendergast had little fortune of her own," Sir Howard went on to explain, "and as Cave Harding soon managed to get hold of and squander the £15,000 which Miss Prendergast, Miss Harding's mother, brought him in marriage,—for it was most imprudently not tied up as it ought to have been,—it follows that all this poor girl can have in the way of money to counteract the lamentable disgrace of such a father, will be any meagre scrapings which her grandmother may be able to leave her. I should tell you that by the late Sir Lionel's will he made his wife's enjoyment of the revenues conditional upon her keeping up the place, including the gardens, et cetera, just as he left it; and so the wonder is how the old lady can manage to make ends meet, let alone any question of saving."

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What was Horace to say or to do? Here was a blow indeed! He felt a great longing to be alone, and endeavour, if possible, to think out the situation. Above all, he longed to be out of his uncle's presence. Now, no detestable thing seemed to him even at all unlikely; and he almost expected Sir Howard to ask him, prompted by something he might read in his disconcerted face, whether he had already proposed to this penniless girl or not.

He turned yet a shade paler at the thought. No idea of the kind, however, was in Sir Howard's mind. It needed little penetration, of course, to see that his nephew was deeply interested in this extremely young lady. Besides, had not Miss Laffinch carefully acquainted him with the fact? But he never so much as dreamt that in the three meetings they had had, this boy and girl had been carried so swiftly along by passion's waves as to have already breathed of love and marriage.

No, even now to Sir Howard's mind it merely appeared that an ardent young fellow had got "spoony" on a rather nice little girl, that they were having a silly flirtation, and that, even taking the most alarming and serious view of matters, it came to no more than this—that Horace might want watching. Much to the latter's relief, then, a very few seconds after the statement the baronet had given of Camilla's impecuniosity, he rose from the breakfast-table, and began to talk quite lightly of that poor devil's —as he called Cave Harding—early career.

"I assure you, Horace, a man one has met everywhere—the smartest of the smart—immensely taken up by the very first people, both men and women. No wonder either—a brilliant talker—in fact, quite a wit; people quoted his sayings. Such a face and figure, too—and these he retains even now. I met him two years ago on a Rhine steamer; but I pretended not to see him—altogether I thought it kinder, you know. His dress—he used to be quoted as a model on all those matters—had become positively seedy; but, except that, I never saw anyone so little changed in—let me see—it must be twenty years. At a little distance, he still looks quite a young man. To be sure, he never drank. So much to his credit, one may say; but, on my honour, I'm afraid that is about the only vice he has not got."

Here Horace, *pour prendre un maintien*, broke into a forced laugh, and also began to pace about the fine, spacious old room.

"Ha, ha, ha! What a description! A tempting father-in-law, certainly!"

But Sir Howard, never good at taking a joke, hereupon grew grave instantly.

"Father-in-law," he cried; "I had rather see anybody I cared for tie a mill-stone round his neck, than wed the child of such a man."

And, magnificent in his own enormous respectability, he strode from the room.

(*To be continued.*)

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A NIGHT'S TERROR IN THE CONNEMARA MOUNTAINS.

AN EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF A COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER, AS TOLD BY HIMSELF.

My name is Joshua Judson: I am, and have been for twenty years, commercial traveller for Messrs. Sarcinet, Snippit and Huxster, the well-known firm of wholesale linendrapers, in Tottenham Court Road. Having been brought up with good commercial principles, possessing a good address, and, though I say it, who perhaps shouldn't, being—well, rather good looking, I soon began to take the leading travelling business for Messrs. Sarcinet, Snippit and Huxster. They put implicit confidence in me, which I venture to consider was not misplaced; and when any part of the travelling business demanded unusual promptitude and tact, it was to me they came. One day, in the spring of the year 1868, Snippit, our senior residing partner, came up to me in the office and said—

"Judson, I want you to lead a forlorn hope. I want you to go and push the trade in the Northern and Western counties of Ireland. Yes, you may well look surprised: it sounds Quixotic, I allow; still, from information the firm has lately received, we have reason to hope that some of the shopkeepers in the smaller towns will take their linen goods and sheetings from us, or at any rate become agents for us, receiving a handsome commission. What we want you to do is simply to press the trade on, and at any price undersell the North of Ireland firms."

Although, personally, I had but faint hopes of success, I, of course, readily assented, and, having received accurate instructions as to the circuit I should take, immediately started. I will not detain you with an account of my tour in the North of Ireland. My success did not justify my employers' anticipations, the Belfast firms having obtained far too firm a footing to be easily ousted. Still I hoped on, and proceeded to the West of Ireland. After indifferent success, I found myself one cold wet November night at Ballybrodergh, a small town in County Galway, at the foot of the Connemara Mountains. This was, as doubtless you will remember, about the time of the great Fenian scare: popular excitement was at its highest, and scarcely a day passed without a report arriving, generally false, that one of the prominent rebels

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had fallen into the hands of Her Majesty's troops. In fact, I cannot help ascribing some of the ill success which attended my mission to the keen party-spirit which then ran so high; many shopkeepers positively refusing to even look at my patterns, merely on the ground that they were Saxon. On the 7th of November, as I have before said, cold, wet and draggled, I arrived at the little inn of Ballybrodergh. On my arrival I was handed a letter, which, from the post-mark, had been waiting for me four days, and also a small parcel. The letter was directed in the handwriting of our junior partner, and ran as follows:—

"Sir,—On your arrival at Ballybrodergh, will you kindly proceed at once to Ballybrodergh Castle, the seat of Colonel Talbot. It is, I believe, a few miles from the town. Take the parcel, which contains the patterns of some sheetings which the Colonel ordered from us a considerable time ago, but which, owing to the recent mill strikes in the North, we were unable to obtain sooner. Please give a full explanation of the delay; and we confidently trust to your well-known tact and courtesy to make the requisite apologies. In case Colonel Talbot should make any selection, forward the same by the first available post.

"Yours obediently,

"Horace Huxster."

It being then past ten, I knew it was no use going to Colonel Talbot that night; so I ordered the "boots" to call me at 7.30 sharp the next morning, and added that the jaunting car of the inn had better be ready for me at twelve punctually. For in those days there was no railway communication between Ballybrodergh and my next destination, O'Mallystown. However, I found out that Colonel Talbot's house lay seven miles from Ballybrodergh on the direct road to O'Mallystown; and so, if I started betimes, I could easily transact my business with him, and still get to O'Mallystown the same evening.

Believing in the old proverb of the early bird, nine o'clock the next morning saw me with my pattern case and order book, endeavouring to conciliate the stony heart of Mr. McGurk, the owner of the one shop in Ballybrodergh. He seemed to be a sort of primitive Whiteley; and provided everything, from a toothpick to a tar barrel. It was however no use; all my powers of eloquence were lost on him; and, seeing there was no prospect of business, I proceeded to leave the shop, when a poor peasant woman entered, carrying in her arms a sickly-looking child. Her appearance arrested my attention. Despite her extreme poverty she was very handsome, with dark hair and eyes, and that noble, graceful carriage, peculiar to Spanish ladies and Irish peasants.

"Will," said the little wizened up shopkeeper, "it's right glad I am to see yer this mornin', Mrs. Macnamee. Doughtless, ye've come to pay Andy's little bills for the powdher; shure it's that that's brought yer these many miles."

"'Dade, and it's not," said the woman, sorrowfully, "and 'av yer didn't sell poor Andy that same powdher, it's good money, and not fair words I'd be bringing yer. No, shure, Mr. McGurk, it's not

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that at all; it's but a bit of flannel I'm asking ye for, for the poor child here," she continued, bending and kissing the emaciated burden she carried, "it's the cruel damp's in her bones, an' sorra a scrap of coverin' has she on these bitter cold nights, barrin' this pace of tattered ould male bag."

"Where's the money, Mrs. Macnamee? Hand me the money, and ye can take the flannel."

"Money is it, and where should I be getting the money, an' ye'll thrust this wance, Mr. McGurk, now won't ye?"

"Thrust is it," interrupted the man, fiercely, "thrusting is a game we've played too long already. I've childer to kape as will as ye."

Here I interrupted, and enquiring the price of the flannel and the quantity required, bought it, presented it to the woman, and hurried back to the inn to escape her thanks. I soon had my traps packed; and at twelve started *en route* for O'Mallystown. My driver was a specimen of the very worst type of the low Irishman. A sullen, obstinate, whisky-drinking brute, very different, with the exception of the last-mentioned attribute, from the usual run of Irish cardrivers, whom I had hitherto found almost too cheery and communicative. The road was rough and hilly, and it was quite two o'clock by the time we arrived at Castle Ballybrodergh. I was shown into the study, where Colonel Talbot, a military-looking man of about sixty, sooned joined me. I showed my letters of introduction, and produced the patterns. With military promptitude the Colonel chose the ones he liked, and then offered me some refreshment, which I refused. Whereupon he said—

"I am sorry you won't have a glass of sherry and biscuit. However, Mr. Judson, you might perhaps like to see over my grounds. They are considered very beautiful, especially the ruins of the old Abbey, which, though they cannot be compared with Beaulieu and Bolton, will, nevertheless, amply repay a visit. My nephew, Jack, who is just going to have a post-prandial pop at the rabbits, will gladly show you the way."

Here he called in a fine, strapping young fellow of five and twenty, gun in hand, to whom he introduced me, and into whose escort he placed me. Really I was itching to get back to my car and go on; still I was loathe to refuse the one solitary piece of hospitality I had received since I set foot in Ireland.

Well, what with one thing and another, seeing the Abbey ruins, visiting the wishing-well, and all the many other sights of a beautiful domain, it was close on five o'clock that, after a cup of tea, I found myself starting for O'Mallystown. I found Mike Kinchela, the cardriver, in a terrible rage at the delay, the reason of which speedily appeared. It seemed he had been hired to take an old lady to a neighbouring wedding the next day, and he was afraid the delay would prevent him getting back to Ballybrodergh

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that night, for he knew well if he put the old mare up at O'Mallystown, she would be a deal too tired and stiff in the morning to get back home in time for the festivities. In the meantime we had begun to enter the long dismal mountain passes, without a dwelling in sight, except here and there a herd's shanty relieving the awful dreariness of the scene. The wind had risen, the rain and sleet came down in sheets, and the heavy storm clouds had so obscured the moon, we could scarcely see a yard ahead of us. When we had gone some few miles the driver pulled up the mare, and said—

"What time d'ye make it?"

"Half-past eight, about," said I.

"Holy Saints!"—he said; then, with an oath, he continued, "Sorra another foot will I go this blessed night—the ould mare's dead broke, and ye must come back with me to Ballybrodergh, for I have to take ould Mrs. Rooney to Tim O'Shaugnessy's widdin' at tin to-morrer."

"Bother Mrs. Rooney," cried I, "Mr. O'Shaugnessy and his wedding too; what's one wedding more or less. Goodness knows you get plenty of them at least, in this improvident county."

"Och, just listen to him, darlin'," said he, apostrophising the old mare, who now stood still in the road with heaving flanks and steaming quarters. "Ye'd be thinkin' that widdins was as chape as christenings, wouldn't ye, achushla."

"I don't care one rap about that," said I, "you agreed to take me to O'Mallystown, and take me you shall. Go on now."

"Divil a stip," he cried, fiercely. "Ould Judy's bate, I'm bate, and 'av ye don't pay me double, money down, ye can just walk to O'Mallystown for all the help I'll give ye."

The blood of the Judson was up; and, regardless of consequences, I made him take my traps out, and without paying him one sixpence, I shouldered my baggage and proceeded as best I could toward my destination, listening mournfully to the wheels of the now fast receding car. All my courage, however, soon oozed out at my fingers' ends, as did that of Mr. Robert Acres, as I trudged through the slush and mire with my baggage over my tired shoulder; and, as I staggered on, wet through, and utterly done-up, I determined that never again would the specious blandishments of Messrs. Sarcinet, Snippit and Huxster induce me to take a circuit, which could not be traced in the familiar pages of Bradshaw.

At last, after blindly staggering on a mile or two, I saw, to my joy, a dim light in the distance. Hastening on, I soon found that it shone through the window of a miserable little cabin, at the door of which I knocked.

"Who's there?" cried a woman's voice.

"A belated traveller," I cried, "for God's sake let me in!"

The door was half opened, to my great surprise and delight,

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by the poor woman I had met that very morning in Mr. McGurk's shop.

"O take me in," I cried, "my good woman, this awful night, and I will handsomely reward you."

The woman rejoined, "Ye can rest an' welcome for the prisint; but it would be worth my life, av I was to let ye stay here the night."

"What," said I, "would you turn me from your doors, with the wind howling like that."

The woman hesitated for a moment, and then led the way into the little shanty. On the rickety table was my beacon, a bit of dip stuck into the neck of a potheen bottle. In one corner of the room lay a broken stock of a gun and a salmon spear, and on the floor were two rough couches made of mountain heather, on one of which lay the poor little child, wrapped in its roll of flannel.

"Av ye stay the night, ye must slape here, and ye must lie stiller than the wild fox on the mountain;" and she opened a thin, rickety inner-door and took me into a little closet where, by the glimmer of the flickering dip, I could see a creel half-full of turf, some suspicious-looking night lines, and a couple of rabbit snares.

"Sor," said she, "av ye hadn't shown the kind heart to my poor sick child there, I'd never be doing this for ye. Here's a bit of bread, it's all I have in the cabin, and take this bit of ould sackin' to put round ye. Stay here, sor, and welcome; but as ye love yer sowl, swear by the Holy Angels that what ye may see or hear this night will never pass your lips." Considerably surprised, I said, "Very well, my good woman, I swear it;" the woman briefly replied "I'll thrust ye," and placing my scanty baggage on the turf-creel, she closed the thin partition as best she could, and left me to the companionship of my own thoughts.

So terrible was the cold, sleep was out of the question. The moon had now risen and poured its rays through the little closet window. Hour after hour passed on as I lay shivering with ague. Suddenly I heard a heavy kick at the outer door.

The woman rushed to it and said—

"Is that you, Andy?"

"Sure an' it is," replied the gruff voice of a man. She pulled back a bolt, as it seemed to me, and he entered and shut the door. "Well, darlin'," she continued, "and what luck have ye had."

"Och, bad, bad, only these two salmon and a garrier[1]; but quick, give me a dhrop of the potheen, for it's right could I am." Soon I heard the glug, glug of the liquor, when the woman suddenly cried—

"Why Andy, darlin', where have yer bane? What have yer bane *doin'*. O God! ye've got blood on your sleeve."

This made me start, and raising myself I listened intently.

"Norah Mavourneen, there's divil a bit of use in thryin' to

[1] Hibernicé, hare.

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chate your pretty eyes. I thought I had washed all the blood off me afther I did it."

"Did what?" shrieked the woman.

"Oh, ye nadn't fear—it's ounly that ould thayf, Ben, I've done for."

"Stop, Andy, don't spake so loud," she hurriedly said.

"So loud," said he, "for why, who's to hear us away on the mountain side?"

"It was ounly the child I was thinking of, she's slapin' an' ye might wake her; but go on, Andy, go on."

"Och, I won't wake it, divil a fear. Yes," continued he, savagely, "that blood ye see on the coat is that of ould Ben."

"Good heavens," thought I, "what tragedy is this."

The man continued, "I've done for the ould thayf at last; I see'd him close to the Black Plantain as I was takin' the garrier from the snare; there he was throttin' down to the strame as proud as a paycock; and so I got behind a hummock of bracken, and put a ball into the ould gun, and just as the moon rose I fired, and sthruck him above the left shoulder, and down he fell stone dead."

Imagine my feelings, as I lay there listening to this terrible disclosure of crime; doubtless this was some poor bailiff or keeper against whom this assassin had a grudge, and had thus revenged himself; or possibly he was a member of one of the secret societies, and for that reason his wife had tried to seal my lips. It was terrible, as I lay there powerless, my blood seemed to freeze, my heart even to stop. My thoughts were suddenly arrested by the woman crying out. "Andy, Andy, this is a black day indade; och wirra, wirra," she sobbed, "and what will the masther say, when he finds ould Ben lying stiff and stark?"

"Now what's the use of wailing and blattherin'. He won't find him, nor will that cursed ould Lovatt, nor no one else, for I took him up on my shoulders, tied a stone round his neck, and there he lies ten foot dape in the Divil's Footpan; and neither ould Talbot nor the polis, nor the Divil himself could get him out again 'av they was to thry, from now to the Day of Judgment." Here the man threw himself down on the couch; and from his heavy breathing soon seemed fast asleep. What was I to do? To reveal the tragedy was to break a sacred oath—to conceal it, was to become nothing short of an accessory to a diabolical crime. The mental struggle was soon over. I determined to waive my private sentiments, and act as my conscience told me; and, as soon as it was sufficiently light, to try and make my escape, hurry back to Castle Ballybrodergh, and inform Colonel Talbot. Soon all was still, and in two or three hours the long-wished for daylight came. All I could hear was the heavy breathing of the man as he lay asleep on his heather couch. At last, having carefully removed my boots, I opened the partition door and stepped into the

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inner-room. The silence seemed terrible. I cautiously stepped over the recumbent form of a huge man, and came to the door. It was fastened by a wooden cross-bolt, which I gently drew back, in doing so the rusty iron hasp creaked. Paralyzed with fear I stopped, the man's heavy breathing ceased, and he moved in his sleep. My heart stood still, that second seemed a year. He, however, resumed his snoring, and I, reassured, drew back the bolt, and without giving the baggage I had left behind a thought, I sprang into the fresh morning air, clapped on my boots, and hurried, as fast as I could tear, back to the Castle.

I rushed up to the house, and roused up the footman, and had an interview with Colonel Talbot, who at first did not seem to like the intrusion. However, as I told my story his interest increased. He asked several questions, and then said—

"I know the man well enough; his little cabin is just on the skirts of my property. He was formerly a tenant of mine, before he took to poaching and bad habits, and ever since he was evicted he has been poaching my preserves and water. I cannot think this is a political thing, yet I can't imagine who the victim can be; he hadn't a special grudge against anyone barring myself. Did he mention any name to his wife?

"Yes," I said, "he did. It was —" I thought and thought, but could not recall the name. The subsequent excitement had entirely effaced it from my memory. "Anyhow," I said, "the place, in which he hid the corpse was the Devil's something."

"What?" said the Colonel, "not the Devil's Footpan?"

"By Jove! that's it," said I.

"Why, that's a famous pool in my own river. So hurry off with Jack to the police, and arrest Macnamee at once, and I will get the keepers to rig up some drags; and by the time you have nabbed Master Andy, who, God knows, scoundrel as he is, I little thought would come to this, I will have everything ready for the search for the corpse."

To cut a long story short, we went to the Barracks, roused the sub-inspector, and in ten minutes Talbot, the sub-inspector, three police and myself were tearing along in a car towards the murderer's cabin.

They rushed in, overpowered Macnamee, who was still asleep, handcuffed him, and, seizing his over-night spoil and the blood-stained coat, took him back with us in the car.

I here took the opportunity of getting hold of all my traps amid a running fire of terrible reproaches from the poor wife, who sat sobbing over her little child, as if her heart would break. The sub-inspector, young Talbot and I were dropped at the Castle, and found the Colonel eagerly giving directions to old Lovatt, the head keeper, who had, with some old iron hooks and a few yards of rope, managed to make a capital dragging machine.

It was now quite light, and we proceeded with every despatch

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to the Devil's Footpan. It was indeed a wild-looking place—a deep pool in the rushing river, surrounded by bare rocks and tangled bracken, below which the water looked cold and black as it swirled slowly round and round in the bleak winter morning.

Thrice did the keepers hurl in the heavy drags, thrice with no result. The fourth time, however, they struck something.

"Begorra, ye've got it," cried old Lovatt. "Heave, lads, heave."

They heaved, indeed, with a will, and soon dragged on the bank a big dark object.

Breathless we all rushed round; and there we saw lying stiff on the bank, not the mutilated corpse of a murdered man, but the stark carcass of a noble mastiff.

"My God, Lovatt," cried the Colonel, "it's your poor old hound! There has indeed been some foul play this night. You were right, Mr. Judson, you were right. Well, never mind the poor old dog now, Lovatt, let's heave in again; quick, quick, my lads, and get out the body of this poor fellow lying under the dark water. Though," continued the Colonel, sadly, as the drags splashed in again, "whoever he may be he couldn't be a better friend nor trustier servant than that poor old Ben lying there."

"*Ben!!* Ben!!!" shouted I, "why that *is* the name I heard Macnamee tell his wife. Oh, I see it all now; what a fool I've been. It's the *dog* he must have killed and not a man at all."

"By Gad, you're right, sir," said the sub-inspector, "for here is the gun-wound over the left shoulder as you described, and here's the stone round the poor brute's collar."

"Yes," said I; "but what could have induced the man to shoot the poor dumb brute?"

"That," replied the Colonel, "is easily explained. Lovatt, my keeper, had taught old Ben, as is our custom hereabouts, to look after the stream, and keep off the poachers. He had been trained to it from a puppy, was the best dog for night work in the three kingdoms, and preserved this piece of water, from the pool here to the old Mill, better than all the keepers that ever tied a fly or made a snare. Many's the night he has stopped Master Andy's fun; and this is the way the blackguard has taken his revenge.

"Bad as it is," I rejoined, "I am very thankful there has not been murder, as we thought. And now, gentlemen, if you will allow me, I will start as soon as possible for O'Mallystown.

Not so fast, my dear sir," said the sub-inspector. "I am equally glad, there has not been so hideous a crime committed, as we anticipated. Still, we have here as good a case against a notorious poacher as one could wish for—the hare and salmon, actually found in the man's possession, and the poor dog murdered. Your evidence is indispensable; and you will have to appear at the Magistrate's Court, which, however, will luckily sit to-morrow. So you won't lose much time."

"But," said I, looking imploringly at the Colonel, "I shall be

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the laughing stock of the whole place; it will be in every London paper to-morrow evening; I shall never hear the last of it. Oh, couldn't you do without me; you've plenty of evidence as it is."

"I am afraid not," replied the Colonel. "Macnamee has been a very old offender, a Napoleon in the ranks of poachers. He was always at it; in fact, that was probably why his poor wife, knowing well what he'd be up to, made you swear not to inform against him. He has for years managed to give us the slip, and now we have him we must keep him. I need hardly say, Mr. Judson, that, as public feeling will be very strong against you in the village, it would be safer for you stay here, and I shall be happy to give you a bed for the night."

I spent that day in misery, looking forward to the morrow with feelings of horror and despair; and, despite the Colonel's efforts to cheer me up, I went to bed with dismal forebodings.

The next day I was driven in a close carriage with the Colonel to the Court House.

The first witness examined was, of course, myself; I described as briefly as possible what I had overheard; and the false conclusion I had drawn. Andy Macnamee was defended by a sharp, unscrupulous little local attorney, who, of course, took up the case gratis, and who, I honestly confess, made me endure as unpleasant a quarter of an hour, in his cross-examination, as I have ever experienced. He held me up as a base informer, as a wanton destroyer of the time-honoured laws of hospitality; nor was my misery in any way relieved by seeing among the lowering faces of the crowd in court, that cursed car driver, whose miserable avarice had brought me into all this trouble. A Sardonic grin embellished his satanic countenance, and he was clearly keenly enjoying the discomforture I showed. Overwhelmed with confusion and annoyance, I left the court, and as the Colonel had many other cases to try with his brother magistrates, I was driven home on an outside car, guarded by two policemen, and surrounded by the frenzied mob, who jeered and threatened me to the very lodge gates. In the evening, when they had at last gone away, young Talbot drove me to the nearest railway station, some five-and-twenty miles off—there I caught the night express for Cork—took the first boat to England, and landed at last in my native land. With a thankful heart I returned to the land of telegraphs, comfort, and evening papers; and with a fixed determination that no earthly reward—not a peerage and £10,000 a year, not the next vacant Garter! no, not even a partnership in the world-renowned firm of Messrs. Sarcinet, Snippit & Huxster—could induce me ever again to plant my foot in the land of "priests praties, and potheen."

J. RANDAL.

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THE TRUE STORY OF ROBIN ADAIR.

"If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully;
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo; but, else, not for the world."

THE circumstances under which were composed the touching verses that usually pass by the title of "Robin Adair," form a veritable idyll of actual life. We have no story to tell of a hopeless passion ending in despair, no tale of rash lovers parted by the commands of harsher, it may be wiser parents, or by the deadly whispered voices of slanderous tongues. Our brief, simple chronicle must needs disappoint those who, with Lydia Languish, regard with dismay the possibility that *they* should ever live to be hailed by the prosaic law-abiding designation of spinster. We propose to treat of what we will at once confess to be, from one point of view, scarcely more than the ordinary course of a love match with the perhaps less ordinary sequel of a very happy marriage. But many circumstances connected with the romantic union are not commonly known. In so far as they may be legitimately recounted without trespassing upon the just susceptibilities of living members of the families concerned we can fairly communicate them to our readers.

In the fashionable haunts of the latter half of the last century a conspicuous and favourite figure was that of him who was generally distinguished by the name of "the fortunate Irishman." Much of his success was due to a singularly handsome person, set off by a winning charm of manner and address, and combined with a tolerable share of the confidence and self-esteem neither unnatural nor peculiar to his race. To these endowments he was indebted for an alliance which gave him an *entrée* into that society where he could display them with advantage and use them with credit. From his antecedents Robert Adair derived next to nothing: his parentage was obscure, and, indeed, cannot with any certainty be traced. A native of Dublin, and educated as a surgeon, he quitted that city in early life upon the discovery of an intrigue in which he had heedlessly engaged. Seeking refuge or

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oblivion in a somewhat ignominious flight, he landed at Holyhead, and with resources that had ever been but of the slightest, found himself with no immediate prospect of subsistence. But from this moment the good fortune crossed his path which never forsook him throughout his career. Starting for London on foot, he had not proceeded far when his attention was directed to a carriage that had overturned on the way. Hastening to the rescue, he found its sole occupant to be a lady of quality, then very well known in polite circles. Adair's services were gratefully accepted, and the lady, being hurt in the accident, on learning he had pretensions to medical skill, availed herself of his further offers of advice, and ultimately proposed that he should attend her upon her journey to town. Arriving in London, his patroness presented him with a fee of one hundred guineas, and gave him a general invitation to her house. Of this adventure Adair always spoke in after life with considerable feeling, averring that the time, no less than the amount, of the fee, was of the greatest use to him, who was then well-nigh destitute. The introductions he gained by this lady's acquaintance were of greater service to him still; and he rapidly emerged from his condition of obscurity. One evening, at a rout in her house, he was presented to a partner upon whom he at once made an impression which affected the whole course of her existence. This was the Lady Caroline Keppel, second daughter of William Anne, second Earl of Albemarle, by his wife Anne, daughter of Charles Lennox, first Duke of Richmond. She who could boast of her not remote descent from a Stuart king, and from the ancient house of the Van Keppels of Verwoede and Wesenbergh, forgetful of her proud lineage, fell violently in love with the Irish surgeon, and, it is said, so unsuccessfully concealed her sudden emotions as to attract the notice of many in the company. Amongst these, we may be sure, was he who inspired them. Unabashed, he pursued his advantage within becoming limits. From that evening began an attachment which nothing could dissipate, the Albemarles and Richmonds meanwhile looking on in the blankest dismay, shocked at the prospect of so terrible a *mésalliance*. Every means were adopted to induce Lady Caroline to change her mind. Diversions, a long journey, a desirable offer —every mode, in short, of avoiding what was considered as an improper match, was tried in turn. Taken by her friends to Bath, that she might be separated from her lover, Lady Caroline is said to have composed the song of "Robin Adair," set to a plaintive Irish tune (resembling that of "Kathleen Aroon") which she had learned from him. Even if not written by her, the verses are simply expressive of her state of mind at this juncture. They corroborate the facts already related, and which, though now merely a family tradition, were well known at the time. There can thus be no doubt as to the source of the pathetic lines, of which the words, as originally written, ran thus:

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"What's this dull town to me?
Robin's not near;
He whom I wish to see,
Wish for to hear.
Where's all the joy and mirth,
Made life a heaven on earth?
Oh! they're all fled with thee,
Robin Adair!

"What made the assembly shine?
Robin Adair!
What made the ball so fine?
Robin was there!
What, when the play was o'er,
What made my heart so sore?
Oh! it was parting with
Robin Adair!

"But now thou art far from me,
Robin Adair!
But now I never see
Robin Adair!
Yet he I love so well
Still in my heart shall dwell;
Oh! can I ne'er forget
Robin Adair!"

But all this scheming proved in vain; Lady Caroline's health became plainly impaired; her relations found that whilst it had been possible to prevent, they could not resist the lovers' affection, and were at length forced to own that a recognised espousal was the honourable, and, indeed, the only solution that could secure their child's happiness—nay, her very life.

In the *Grand Magazine of Universal Intelligence* for 1758, their marriage is thus announced: "February 22nd: Robert Adair Esq.: to the Right Honourable the Lady Caroline Keppel." Within a few days Adair was appointed Inspector General of Military Hospitals, and subsequently becoming a favourite of the King, was made Surgeon-General, King's Serjeant-Surgeon, and Surgeon of Chelsea Hospital. Very fortunate men have seldom many friends, but Adair, by declining a baronetcy, which the sovereign offered to him for surgical attendance upon the Duke of Gloucester, actually acquired considerable popularity before his death, which took place when he was nearly fourscore years of age, in 1790. His obituary notice in the *Gentleman's Magazine* comprises a passable set of verses.

Lady Caroline Adair did not long enjoy her married life. The decline which ensued upon her earlier distress quickly gained ground, and she died of consumption soon after the birth of her third child. Upon her death-bed she begged her husband to wear mourning for her as long as he lived. This injunction he scrupulously observed, save on the birthdays of the King and Queen, when his duty to them required his attendance at court in full dress. If his wife's intention was to ensure that he should not marry

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again, her purpose was effected, for he did not take a second wife, though he was the object of several intimations that a proposal from him would not meet with a denial. His only son, the Right Honourable Sir Robert Adair, G.C.B., served his country with distinction as a diplomatist. Dying in 1855, aged 92, he was the last surviving political and private friend of his relative Charles James Fox, whose father had married a daughter of the second Duke of Richmond. He is satirised in Canning's *Rovers* as "Rogero," the unlucky student, lover of "sweet Matilda Pottingen," having been expressly educated for the diplomatic corps at the University of Gottingen.

W. E. MILLIKEN.

SONNET.

GREAT Pan is dead, and his sweet pipes are still,
The very echoes of his pæans are
Like the remembrance of the evening star,
Dropped suddenly behind some steadfast hill;
The fountains pure, where priests were wont to fill
Jove's lavers, flow no longer; in the car
Of Phœbus sits no ruler; near and far
There is no greater god than man's own will
Save love, who throned within the hearts of men
Most godlike burns, not as the sun whose beams
Die with the even, tho' they rise again,
But in the dim night too, for in our dreams
We oft-times see what so prophetic seems,
That waking sad, we say "Ah, when! ah, when?"

M. C. ROBERTS.

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"FOR AULD LANG SYNE."

CHAPTER I.

THERE IS NO LIMIT TO A WOMAN'S EXPECTATIONS.

"RALPH OLDCASTLE is overdoing it. He'll break down," one barrister remarked to another, as the tall, gaunt form of a well-known Q.C. passed out of the Temple. "He works all day and writes all night, and no man can stand that sort of thing very long. He looks positively ill to-day."

"No wonder. I haven't known him to take a holiday for fifteen years; if he don't take care he'll 'cave' suddenly. It's a mistake for a man to pursue two professions when he can live comfortably by either;" and the speaker sighed regretfully. "Besides, Oldcastle is a rich man, he has no need to work at all, and as a matter of course every good thing falls in his way. I hear he's retained in the great Clifton Swindling Case."

"Yes, he's certainly lucky; but he's uncommonly sharp too. However, judging by his appearance to-day, he won't last long—he's breaking fast—fast;" and the speakers, who had been standing under the Temple gateway from a heavy shower, nodded complacently and went their several ways; the removal of even one successful man from amongst them would give each a chance of filling his place.

Ralph Oldcastle, meantime walked hurriedly citywards, unmindful of the drenching rain. At the top of Ludgate Hill he wheeled round suddenly and walked back again—a tall man, round-shouldered and gaunt, with thin straggly grey hair, and bright deep-set eyes; a keen, honest, repellant man, with a hard mouth, that never smiled. He was intensely respectable and respected, but he had few friends and fewer acquaintances, and no amiable weaknesses. He was charitable, never behind in subscribing to legitimate "relief" funds, never refusing a donation when demanded in due and proper form, but no one ever saw him buy a penny flower in the street, or a "fifth-edition special" of an evening paper. He never went home encumbered with useless "notions" or "novelties."

Stock-brokers and bankers might purchase dancing dolls and terra-cotta monstrosities, live mice and patent purses, as everyone knows they do, else why should the vendors of such wares multiply and flourish outside the Stock Exchange and the Bank

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Ralph Oldcastle never even cast a passing glance on such trumpery, nor was he ever seen with a bass basket containing fish or fruit, or a fern in a pot; he never thought of such things, never carried loose pennies in his overcoat pocket for emergencies, never overpaid a cabby, in short he had no visible weaknesses at all. His inner life was as hard, cold, and unsympathetic as his outer.

He had chambers in Pump Court, close to where "a white stone flashes over Goldsmith's ashes,"—a stone, white no longer, but smirched and stained with the grime of the city—but the lawyer never gave it a passing glance. Had you mentioned the name he would possibly have turned to the Law List to see who Oliver Goldsmith was.

There was nothing in Mr. Oldcastle's rooms save their native picturesque inconvenience to redeem them from utter ugliness. They were solidly shabby; with heavy leather-covered mahogany furniture, dull merino curtains, and colourless, echoless, Turkey carpet. Books on two sides of the sitting-room from floor to ceiling, but not a gay cover or page of light reading amongst them—not a picture or photograph even; not an ornament of any kind save two bronze Lord Chancellors, and a marble and malachite clock, that ticked aggressively on the discoloured marble mantel-piece. In one of the windows there stood an old-fashioned inlaid bureau, that looked as if it might possibly contain secrets of a sentimental nature; but externally it was grave and prim, brass-bound and brass-locked, it gave no sign, if it contained anything, of the past of Ralph Oldcastle.

There were many who wondered why the successful lawyer and legal writer continued to reside in Pump Court. Less wealthy and less important men had their suburban villas and kept their carriages; but he had lived in London for nearly twenty years. He loved to feel the throb of its mighty heart, the vibration of its ceaseless pulse; he could not have existed away from it. His only pleasure was to watch the ebb and flow of humanity in Fleet Street; his recreation was a solitary walk at midnight from Temple Bar to Charing Cross. Too accustomed to crime in all its aspects to be grieved or shocked at the vice that flaunts or crawls up and down the busy highway, still he scanned every face with cold curiosity, and sometimes sighed like a man haunted or oppressed by some horrible fear.

He was not looking for anyone; still, for years, he had taken that midnight walk and had he observed one face, amid "the pallid and pitiful throng," he would scarcely have been surprised.

Returning from his hurried aimless walk up and down Fleet Street, Ralph Oldcastle entered his sitting-room and rang a bell. It was answered by a clerk, a slim dark-eyed obsequious youth, whose history was a romance. Born in vice, cradled and nurtured in *iniquity*, educated amongst a gang of thieves, he miraculously *escaped being* either a house-breaker or convict. Oldcastle picked

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him up one day (when his heart was softer), fed him, clothed him, took him into his service, expected nothing in return and was paid by the warmest gratitude and esteem. Edward Little could not love his master, but he nearly worshipped him; he had served him faithfully for seven years, and would serve him to his life's end. The lawyer smiled grimly—he did not believe in gratitude; and some day, when it suited him, Little would turn round and rend him; "but he cannot hurt me," he said to himself, with his hard dry laugh. "No one can do that now. I've given Little nothing but the bread he has earned, I expect nothing in return." The dark-eyed clerk looked at his master attentively; and waited his orders in silence. "I shall be occupied all the afternoon, Edward; do not allow me to be disturbed on any pretence whatever," he said shortly, and Edward withdrew puzzled, but silent; he never answered his master—no one did.

Left alone the lawyer sat at his writing table and took a letter from his pocket. After a few moments' hesitation he read it, reluctantly, as if it was a thing he was constrained to do in spite of himself; then he smoothed it out carefully on his table, and selecting a key from one of his drawers, unlocked the bureau, and from a secret receptacle drew forth a packet of letters, and laid them beside that other on the table—still, as a man acting in spite of himself. His face was horribly pale, his eyes flashed and sparkled in their sunken sockets, and his hands, slight and white with well-tended nails, quivered nervously. One by one he read the letters over—and there were many of them—once or twice he laughed savagely at some expression; and when he had got through them he pushed them aside with a scowl. "Twenty years have I waited for this—lived for it, worked for it, hoped for it! I knew it would come, and it has," he said, aloud; "now, to make the most of it."

For a long time Ralph Oldcastle sat silent regarding the correspondence before him. On the right, two dozen of loose letters, written in a slender, girlish hand, and overflowing with girlish expressions of unalterable love and undying devotion, beginning: "My own dearest Ralph," ending "Your ever-loving Connie." On the left a blurred and blotted note, containing a few lines in a woman's hand, heavy with sorrow and suffering. "Dear Mr. Oldcastle, I am in sore distress; I know no one in the wide world to turn to for advice and assistance save you. I wronged you once, but Heaven knows, I have been bitterly punished—all my life. Will you help me for Auld Lang Syne; you were my husband's friend, and something more than mine. We are both friendless and helpless now, and have only you to turn to.—Constance Wilton." "I wonder if she has been as constant to him as she has been to me," Mr. Oldcastle said, as he locked up the letters. "I wonder if she has smiled on him with that tender trustfulness she practised on me; I wonder if she softened his heart and turned his head with her witcheries and then drove him mad by her

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coldness; sent him to the devil by her heartlessness, as she might have sent me, had I not been made of sterner stuff than most men. I wonder what she expects me to do for Henry Wilton, the friend whom I loved and trusted, and who repaid me by treachery and deceit; I wonder what, in reason and common justice, she expects me to do for him. But there is no limit to a woman's expectations, and she knows nothing of reason and less of justice. However, let her come and see me by all means, and tell me her history. It cannot fail to be interesting to me, after patiently waiting twenty years for it. Oh yes, I will hear the history of Constance and Henry Wilton by all means, and try to forget that she was once my promised wife and he my dearest friend, and that both played me false. It is perfectly true that *everything* comes to him who knows how to wait, and revenge is not the *worst* thing in life worth waiting for."

Hard, stern, uncomprising, was Ralph Oldcastle's face, as he wrote a few lines on half a sheet of paper:

"If Mrs. Wilton will call on Mr. Oldcastle at three o'clock on Monday, he will be pleased to learn in what way he can be of service to her."

That was all he said, and he smiled with almost fiendish malignity as he thought how it would mislead her; yes, he would be pleased enough to know how he could help her, but knowing how, would he do it, was a more doubtful matter. If a man like Ralph Oldcastle waits twenty years for revenge for a real or imaginary injury, he is not going to forego it at a moment's notice. It was foolish of Constance Wilton to appeal to him for Auld Lang Syne, for the memory of those days was still sore in his heart.

Chapter II.

"CONNIE, UNALTERED BY TIME OR CIRCUMSTANCE, STOOD BEFORE HIM."

It was on Saturday afternoon that the lawyer wrote to Mrs. Wilton, and on Sunday morning he went, according to his usual custom, to the Temple Church.

Neither the service nor sermon impressed him very much; his thoughts were busy with the past, and in the afternoon, instead of going for a walk according to his almost invariable habit, he sat down in his easy-chair and began to think what he should say on the morrow. Would Constance be much changed? He laughed aloud as he thought of how heavily time had touched himself. When he last saw her he was a light-hearted, good-looking young fellow of five-and-twenty, with plentiful waving black hair that she had often run her white fingers through; now, he was old and grim and bald, and altogether unlovely. She would have altered too, doubtless, if there was any poetic justice; she should look worse than him—remorse should have silvered her hair, saddened her

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eyes, seared her forehead, and poverty, the iron-heeled, would have crushed her down, for Wilton was poor, and the sort of man that would remain poor all his life, he reflected, with a grim chuckle; the sort of man who never knew how to take care of the pence, and consequently, never likely to have many pounds that might be left to their own devices—while he, Ralph Oldcastle, was rich, rolling and wallowing in wealth. The thought was soothing; it was enjoyable; money was power, influence, happiness, and money now could buy his revenge.

It was a still sultry day, with thunder in the atmosphere. The silence in Pump Court was unbroken save by a drowsy murmur of insects in the air. As he sat alone the lawyer's thoughts went back to a Sunday long ago, when he first saw Constance Reade. It was just such weather—sultry, oppressive, and distinctly threatening; and he noticed her change colour several times during service as a distant peal of thunder echoed sulkily amongst the hills. He was on a visit with some relatives in Cumberland, and in the course of a few days he met Constance Reade, the vicar's only daughter, and from the very first moment he met her, he loved her. Before his brief holiday was over, for he was studying law then, he told her of his affection and asked her to be his wife. Then followed three months of absence cheered by her loving letters, and again he visited Cumberland. The memory of that month was the happiest of his whole life—not a cloud or shadow or sad recollection darkened it; it was all clear, unbroken summer sunshine, and it was after his return, she wrote him those tender, loving letters lying in the old bureau. At Christmas he went North again accompanied by his chum, Harry Wilton. He was handsome, clever, fascinating: knew all about church decorations, acting charades, *tableau vivants*; could sing, dance, skate, make himself agreeable in a score of frivolous ways Ralph Oldcastle despised, but that found favour in the eyes of the ladies. Of course, he and Connie liked each other; that was only natural seeing that Harry was Ralph's chum; and after a time every one, except the confident and happy lover, saw that Wilton was abusing his friend's kindness and paying more than ordinary attention to Connie Reade. But the holidays ended, both young men returned to town, and a month after Wilton left suddenly, saying he had business in Scotland. Connie joined him, and they were married; leaving her astounded and indignant father to break the news to the outraged lover. The vicar was a man of honour, and though, as a Christian, he forgave his daughter, he refused to receive either her or her husband; both had offended past such practical pardon as that. Ralph Oldcastle registered a vow to be revenged some day on them both, and then, with a resolution seldom equalled, he buried every thought of the woman who had deceived him and the friend who had betrayed him at the bottom of his heart, and piled monuments of thought, hard as granite, on the

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top of them. Wilton gave up the study of law; he could not return to London and face his friend,.and some of his relatives procured him a situation in a Bank in Birmingham. That was the last Ralph heard of him; he never sought to know more, but he waited with slow, unexpectant persistency, for the turn of fortune's wheel that he assuredly felt would bring him face to face with his enemy. And now the time was at hand. He had not gone out of his way to seek it; but, Fate, who if left to work out her will balances most things, brought his vengeance to his very door.

Again and again he assured himself that he was happy; that had he to live his life over again, he would not wish it any different. Love, marriage, little children clinging to his neck, strong sons and fair daughters to cheer and gladden him—what did they all amount to? Vanity and vexation. His daughters would leave him for the first empty whipper-snapper that came by: his sons might perhaps squander his substance in riotous living. Toil, care, worry, anxiety; would he change his life of unbroken peace and quiet for those things? No, a thousand times no. As he sat thinking, a sudden shadow darkened the room, followed by a blinding flash, and then a long crackling peal of thunder, that seemed to shake the house to its very foundation. The lawyer shivered nervously, and passed his hand across his brow. There was something uncanny in the air, something terribly oppressive in the awful stillness that followed that sudden peal. For the first time in his life, perhaps, he realised what it was to feel alone—utterly, really, helplessly, alone. Then through the stillness came a gentle tap at the outer door, as if the knocker was raised by a feeble or faltering hand. He listened in wonder for a few minutes; then it was repeated more loudly, and with a strange puzzled expression he stood up and opened the door. There on the mat, pale, trembling, scared by the storm, and shrinking back as if still more afraid of him, stood Constance Reade—Connie as he had known her long ago, with the same sweet smile, tender, loving eyes, and sunny hair; Connie, unaltered by time or circumstance, stood before him, mutely pleading, with outstretched hands, and with a low suppressed cry he took them and led her into the room.

CHAPTER III.

"HE IS GUILTY, RALPH, BUT HE IS CONNIE'S FATHER, AND I WANT YOU TO SAVE HIM."

RALPH OLDCASTLE placed his trembling visitor in a seat, and regarded her curiously for a few moments, a thousand strange thoughts chasing each other through his brain. "Was Constance dead and this her ghost? Was he mad, or dreaming?" He couldn't determine, and the girl sat silent, waiting for him to speak.

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"Who are you, and what can I do for you?" he said at length, in a slow husky voice.

"I am Constance Wilton, and I've come because my mother is very ill. She bids me thank you for writing. Will you come and see her, as she is not able to come to you, and to-morrow may be too late."

"Then you are her daughter?"

"Yes, her only child. I have no one in the wide world except her, and soon I fear, I fear——, Oh, sir, can you do anything for her; she is dying, I think, of want and misery and loneliness, and I am powerless to help her; can you?" and she caught his hand and looked entreatingly into his face.

"I will do what I can," he replied, not meeting her glance, "what is it you want?"

"Come and see mother; she says to-morrow will be too late."

"You have a father, have you not?"

"Yes, I have a father, but I have not seen him for a long time, and mother never speaks of him now," the girl replied, growing suddenly crimson and hanging her head, but Mr. Oldcastle asked no more questions. Obeying a sudden impulse, he put on his hat and said he was ready to accompany Connie home, glancing at her furtively as she led the way downstairs. "So like," he muttered, "so like that it might be her very self. Is it a mere trap, I wonder, or is she really ill."

He was not left long in doubt; the girl walked swiftly up Fetter Lane and then turned down a narrow street.

In one of the poorest and shabbiest of a row of wretched houses, Mrs. Wilton and her daughter were lodging, and Ralph Oldcastle shuddered as he thought of their surroundings. But Connie passed through a double row of idlers and loungers without appearing to see them, and entered a room on the third floor. On a rickety horse-hair sofa lay a woman with white hair, a worn colourless face and closed eyes—Connie's mother. The lawyer started, and smothered an exclamation. Could that emaciated woman be Constance Reade? Surely not!"

"Mother dear, here is Mr. Oldcastle," the girl whispered, and as she opened her eyes and extended her hand, he seemed to recognise her. A strange tremor passed through his frame as he touched those wasted fingers, and all feelings of revenge died out of his heart towards her, but, with some one else, there would be a heavy account to settle.

"Thank you for coming, Ralph," she said, faintly, "I did not ask you till the very last, but I knew you would not fail me. Connie leave us alone; I have much to say to Mr. Oldcastle."

Reluctantly the girl left the room, and closed the door after her, but she did not go far. She observed a startling change in her mother's appearance, even during the short time she had been absent. "Perhaps it may only be the effects of the storm,

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Mother was always dreadfully frightened by thunder," she said, as she stood at the window watching the lightning cleave through the black clouds. But her heart misgave her; there was something beside mere nervous dread in her mother's face.

Ralph Oldcastle sat down by the sofa, and waited for Mrs Wilton to speak.

"You forgive me, Ralph," she said, at length, "I treated you ill, but I have suffered, and I want you to forgive him and to help him; he is in prison, and will soon be tried for a terrible crime. He is guilty, Ralph, but he is Connie's father and I want you to save him."

"If he is guilty how can I save him?" The words came low, and hoarse; the woman, for the old time's sake, was expecting too much from him.

"You are clever, Ralph, terribly clever. I have heard of you, and read all your speeches, and if you try to save any one you can. If you are against anyone there is little hope for him. Ralph, you will not appear against your old friend, against her father, and send him to a convict prison. Think of it, she will soon have no one in the world but him; would you leave her utterly friendless? So young, so beautiful, so inexperienced. If you have a daughter, Ralph, think of her now and spare my Connie?"

"You ask more than it is in my power to grant, Mrs. Wilton; law and justice are not in my hands," he said, coldly.

"But you can do much; you are engaged for the prosecution in the Clifton Swindling Case, and—and, Harry Wilton is implicated in it; if you appear against him he is lost."

"Oh!" The exclamation seemed wrenched from the very depths of Ralph Oldcastle's heart, and was followed by a long silence. "I will not appear against him," he said, at length; "don't say anything more about *him* now, but tell me what I can do for you!"

"Nothing, Ralph, I am past all help, but if you will promise to be a friend to Connie when I am gone, it will make my last hours easier. She will be utterly alone should anything—should the worst—happen to her father, but you will save him—I know you will. He was sorely tempted, and was but the tool of others. Have mercy on him, Ralph—you who never knew want or misery—who, in your happy, prosperous life, were never brought face to face with temptation. You must be merciful—for you are strong and he has suffered."

"I will do what I can." The words came slowly and reluctantly, but he could not deny the request of the women, who with her latest breath pleaded for her husband, though he had brought her to such a pitch of misery and destitution. Yet he ground his teeth with suppressed rage, as he felt his vengeance slowly slipping through his fingers. He was a hard man but he was human, and

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revenge was out of place by that couch; even Ralph Oldcastle felt that.

After a little more conversation about Connie, and some feebly expressed fears for her future, Mrs. Wilton suddenly sunk into a doze, and in a few moments her daughter entered the room and glanced at the couch anxiously, "Mother is worse," she whispered, "what have you been saying to her, sir?"

"Nothing darling, only that he will be kind to you when I'm gone" the invalid said, faintly. "Mr. Oldcastle has been very, very good, Connie, and you must be grateful to him all your life."

"Yes, Mother," and her eyes filled with tears. "I could not help being grateful to anyone who was kind to you."

"I have done nothing, nothing—and I think your mother had better rest; she seems very much fatigued. I'll call again to-morrow," and Mr. Oldcastle left the room hurriedly, with a strange cold feeling down his back. Connie carried him dangerously into the past, and his thoughts were of her as he walked up and down the Embankment for two hours before returning to his chambers. The storm had cleared away; the atmosphere was lighter and the lawyer felt lighter, too, than he had done for a long time.

Before ten o'clock the next morning he had done two things that he would have laughed to scorn at the mere suggestion of two days before. He had thrown down his brief in the great Clifton Swindling Case, and secured the services of an able counsel to defend Henry Wilton. Then he went round to Mrs. Wilton's lodgings, feeling a stealthy sensation of pleasure, as he anticipated her joy and gratitude. Connie opened the door in answer to his knock, and laid her finger on her lip, to command silence as she led him in. The blind was down, and the room in deep shadow. "Mother's asleep, she has slept quite peacefully for some hours," the girl whispered, moving on tip-toe, "we must be very careful not to wake her." Cautiously Ralph Oldcastle drew near the sofa, and laid one finger on the wasted wrist. Then he drew back suddenly and Connie was at his side in a moment. One look into his face and she read the whole truth. There was no more waking in this world for Constance Wilton, and with an exceedingly bitter cry her daughter dropped down insensible at Ralph Oldcastle's feet.

CHAPTER IV.

"I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN WHAT TO EXPECT FROM A WOMAN'S GRATITUDE."

SIX months passed by before the grim lawyer in Pump Court fully realized the great change that had come over him. Life was no longer the dull monotonous routine it had been. There was brightness and beauty in the solidly shabby chambers, for Constance Wilton was there. She had been living with Mr. Oldcastle ever since her mother's death. He took her home that

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day, and she had never left him since. His efforts were unavailing to save her father; he was too clearly guilty, but death mercifully released him from paying the penalty of his crimes; and save for her self-constituted guardian, Connie was alone in the world. At first the lawyer did not know what to do with her, but she adapted herself to his life, and fitted in with his ways wonderfully. There was plenty of room in those rambling chambers, and she soon had two little closets fitted up for herself, where she could retire to if she seemed at all in the way.

Flowers bloomed in the windows and outside them, and there was a brightness and gladness about the place it had never known before. It never struck Ralph Oldcastle that chambers in the Temple was scarcely the place for a girl so young and beautiful as Connie to reside. He was strangely unmindful of conventionalities at all times; all he requested was that she would not go out without him, but he laid no restriction on her as to how she amused herself all day. As the weeks and months passed, he became distinctly conscious of one thing—he could never lose her again. She had grown into his heart and into his life, filled the place once occupied by her mother, and this second love that had sprung up in him was perhaps more intense than the first. He fairly revelled in it, and congratulated himself on the solitude he had lived in; no fascinating friend to step in now and win his prize. Connie knew no one, saw no one but himself, and she seemed perfectly happy and contented. Every day he resolved to tell her the state of his feelings and ask her to be his wife, yet when night came he found he had been silent, he scarce knew why; perhaps, because he did not like to break the pleasant affectionate relations that existed between them. One day, however, he did not go out in the morning according to his usual custom, and Connie started when she entered the sitting-room and found him there.

She blushed to a deep crimson and seemed uneasy, and Mr. Oldcastle construed the circumstances favourably, and resolved to hesitate no longer, "Come here, Constance," he said, gently drawing her to the high couch, "I have something of great importance to say to you. Listen, my dear one, I love you. I want you to be my wife!"

"Oh, no, no—that can never be," she cried, springing away from him with such an expression of utter dismay, that he grew sick and chill, "Oh, please Mr. Oldcastle, don't say that!"

"I must say it, for it is true. I love you," he replied, with some return of his dogged manner; "whether you care about me or not is another question. Am I so very hateful that you cannot even come near me?"

"It is not that," she wailed, kneeling beside him and hiding her face on his knee, "I love you dearly, dearly, but not that way—I never thought of it, never dreamed of it."

"Is it too late to think of it now, then?"

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"Yes, too late. Oh, please do not say any more."

"You love someone else. As your guardian, I have at least the right to ask that. Tell me the truth, Constance, I will know it," he added, fiercely—jealousy, anger, and disappointment all surging like fire through his veins, but she only sobbed silently, uttering no word, and glancing at him with pleading, tearful eyes.

"I might have known what to expect from a woman's gratitude," he muttered, fiercely, "like mother—like daughter, only she has not deceived me. She, at least, has not deluded me with false promises and false hopes, but she is not honest and straight. How could she be with such a father and mother?"

At that moment the sitting-room door opened suddenly, and Edward Little swung into the room. Seeing Connie sobbing on the carpet, he was at her side in a moment.

"My darling, what is the matter?" he said, taking both her hands, "are you ill?"

Ralph Oldcastle reeled back a step as if struck by a sudden blow. "You, too," he cried; "this is too much. Edward Little, stand back; and Constance Wilton, look up and answer me."

"I'll answer for her, sir," the young fellow said, firmly, drawing the trembling girl closer to him. "I love her, and she returns my affection and has promised to be my wife, that's all. I'm sorry, sir, that we did not ask your consent, but it came on us both before we knew."

"You have spoken to me of gratitude, Edward Little; it pleased you on various occasions to remark that I had been a friend to you. Did you mean to prove your gratitude by stealing the affections of my ward, and betraying the confidence I reposed in you—but I expected nothing and am not disappointed. You may go. I have nothing further to say!"

"But I have, sir! I have betrayed no trust, been guilty of no fault. Day after day, week after week, month after month you have left her here alone, without a soul to speak to save me. I loved her—under the circumstances no one could help doing so—and was fortunate enough to win her affections in return; surely there is no great crime in that. But I am ready to go!"

"Then do go," the lawyer thundered; "and never let me look on your face again. As for you, Constance, you must choose between him and me; give him up and you shall be as my own child; cleave to him and we are strangers. Choose!"

"Is there no other way?" she cried, clasping her hands. "Oh! sir, be merciful to us!"

"Choose!" he repeated, sternly.

Slowly she withdrew her hand and placed it in Edward Little's. "I have chosen, sir. I thank you for all your great kindness. I am deeply, bitterly grieved at having offended you, but I love Edward. I cannot give him up."

"So much for a woman's gratitude," the lawyer said, scornfully.

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"Still, you are honest, and I respect the quality when I meet with it. You may remain here for a week; by that time I suppose Mr. Little will have a home of some sort to take you to. And now I think this interview may end."

* * * * * *

Ralph Oldcastle appeared at the breakfast-table next morning with a very pale face and a curious, scared expression in his eyes; Connie was at her accustomed post, but she looked ill and haggard after a sleepless night. To her infinite surprise, her guardian bent down and kissed her tenderly on the forehead. "I was harsh yesterday, my dear; forget all I said to you, and tell Edward I forgive him and that he may come back."

He was not a man who did anything by halves, and when Connie and Edward were married they had a pleasant home provided for them, and a liberal income. It was a long time before they learned the reason of his sudden forgiveness, and then they thought it a slight cause for such a very happy effect. Mr. Oldcastle had dreamed that Mrs. Wilton stood by his bedside and asked him, for Auld Lang Syne, to be kind to her child; then finding he did not answer, she added, solemnly, "Forgive, as you hope to be forgiven." Three times was the dream repeated before he gave in. He never told them of the icy touch on his forehead, of the bodily presence he believed stood by his bedside, but his pride was broken, his heart softened, and he pardoned Connie Wilton and her lover.

And he never regretted it. They are his children now, and their little ones will cheer and comfort his old age. Revenge to some natures may be sweet, but stern Ralph Oldcastle has found out that it's infinitely sweeter to forgive.

H. BROOKE HOUSTON.

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A LOST LIFE.

Beloved of pit, and idol of the stalls,
Some sixty years ago she was; and now,
Still stately, with a certain mellowed grace
Touching her face, once nobly beautiful,
She lived retired, resigned to sit and wait
Life's last event; nor sordid station hers,
Nor wealth; but husbanded sufficiency
Gave all she needed. Wealth in love of friends
And kindred had she; and her walls smiled down
And cheered with souvenirs of younger days
And triumphs well remembered, when her looks,
Her gait, her smile, her rendering of this
Or that choice passage of some master hand,
And soaring passion of her perfect voice,
Were all the theme of coffee-house and club.
The world long wondered why no married lot
Had power to tempt her; why, through all the maze
Of lovers titled, and untitled, she
Had lightly stepped with her sweet, serious smile,
Nor gave her life to any.
To the niece,
Who lived with her, indeed she told a tale
Of one, in fortune high, in virtues great,
A statesman and a soldier not unknown,
Who loved her she was sure; for whom she felt,
She might confess, some liking; and he went
Here, there, attending on her when she trod
The lyric stage, and with a wistful gaze
For ever worshipped her, yet never dared
To speak of love, too bashful, or too proud,
Or fearing harsh rejection—yet she knew
If he had spoken all her life had been
In all things changed, so happy; not so lone
As often then it was. But the great will
Of God was done, and she was well content;
And to this theme of love she often turned,
As one who wished to dwell upon its chance
And muse what might have been.

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One winter day,
The sleet in sallies sweeping down the street,
Her curtains drawn, her well-loved niece and she
Sat, turning relics and old letters o'er,
And tokens sent by men she knew in name
But only so, in days when she was fair,
An old buhl cabinet with open drawers
Beside them. Suddenly her young niece cried,
"Look, in the drawer's back, choked with dust, I find
A faded bouquet: see—it falls, at touch,
To pieces." Then the elder's sweet dim eyes,
Aided by spectacles, saw too, and said,
"Yes, dear, I know that bouquet well indeed,
He sent it me the day I saw him last;
I looked at him whene'er I had to sing
And thought he looked distracted. Well, he sent
That bouquet to me the same night, but not
A word or letter with it; soon I heard
He left for India. And last year he died—
Nay, was it last? No, five or more long years—
An old man, single, living quite alone
As I. Yes, there's the ribbon still that bound
The flowers; the flowers indeed are dust, they once
Were bright and costly, odorous as love,
And sweet as life might once have bloomed for me.
Is any perfume left?—pah! strange, what once
Was sweet may be revoltant."
"Nay, but look;
See Auntie, see, there's something in the midst,
A something like a letter."
"Give it me!
A letter! Oh, great Heaven, from him to me!"
So took the faded, brown, and twisted scrap
Of paper, and with eager eyes, tho' old,
She, with her niece's help, made out the scroll.
'Twas dated: "Eighteen hundred twenty-five," and ran—
"My dearest honoured lady,"—
("Truly aunt,
A lover-like commencement,"—
"Read—read on,"
In low voice, husky with an inner sob,
The elder said)—
"I love you as my life,"
Went on the letter; "say but one word—one:
Send but a hint you love me—or will try
To do so. Say I am not all in fault
In writing thus; give me one little sign,
And that sign 'Come,' and I will come this night

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And tell my love, and ask your hand for wife."
A low sob broke the reading.
"Poor, poor aunt!'
The younger lady soothing said; "Two lines
Yet more there are—I finish them":
"But if
You send no word or token back to me,
I then conclude—you cannot love me; leave
My land and you for ever. But I hope,
I hope, my dear, for better future. Thine
For ever, truly thine,—
"C. Davenant."
"Why, aunt! dear aunt!" for now the aged eyes
Flashed forth a long forgotten fire—and then
Came bitter tears fast crowding on their lids.
And the half-stifled voice broke fluttering forth,
"He loved me!——loved me——loved me!——and I knew
It not—and thought him cold——and gave no sign——
And——broke his heart——and sent him far away.
And——he is *dead!*——dead, and he never knew
I loved him so—yes, with my very heart.
His life——my life——both lost. Ah me, ah me!"
Then—as her niece gazed, scared to see such flash
Of fire in one so old and feeble—sank
Again upon her chair, her life too weak
To bear such bitter heart-break; and she fell,
With her sad smile upon her lips—asleep.

J J. BRITTON.

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THE THIN RED LINE.

PART II.

For hand-to-hand or close fighting no weapon, ancient or modern, has ever surpassed in deadliness that used by the Romans in Rome's best days. A short cut-and-thrust sword, not unlike that still carried by our buglers and drummers, was common to all, but the "hastate," the youngest and least distinguished soldiers, carried two javelins, one to hurl and the other reserved as a defence against cavalry. These constituted the first line, which, if repulsed, retreated slowly on the second line, composed of "principes," armed in the same manner, but picked men; and if both these were driven back, they relied on the third, the triarii veterans, rendered illustrious by their services and wounds, the last reserve of the legion. Besides these classes, a body of "velités," or light infantry, was attached to every legion, who, along with the cavalry, generally occupied the flanks in the order of battle. They carried no armour, but only a round buckler, and were armed with a sword and javelin. The legionary was not only very skilful in the use of his weapons, but he was equally expert with entrenching tools, and whenever a legion encamped, were it only for a night, or even at the gates of Rome, an entrenchment was always thrown up round the camp. The privilege of serving in the army had, until the time of Marius, been reserved for the worthiest citizens of the republic, and the possession of landed property was a necessary qualification for a Roman soldier, as the pay he received was barely enough for his scantiest wants. The civil offices of the State were alone open to those who had served, and consequently the higher classes of the people sought eagerly for admission to the ranks. In the civil wars of Marius and Sylla all this was changed; the legions were opened to enfranchised slaves and felons, and hence the seeds of turbulence and corruption were laid which eventually led to the fall of the Roman Empire, and to the fatal day when its citizens could sadly exclaim, *Quondam vicimus armis!*

Among the crowd of barbarous nations who shared in the spoil at the final break-up of the Western Empire, the Franks were the most pre-eminently warlike. A warrior of this race will therefore afford the reader a fair type of the "barbarian," and to this end I cannot do better than quote the incomparable de-

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scription of the historian, Gibbon:—"The love of freedom and of arms was felt, with conscious pride, by the Franks themselves, and is observed by the Greeks with some degree of amazement and terror. 'The Franks,' says the Emperor Constantine, 'are bold and valiant to the verge of temerity, and their dauntless spirit is supported by the contempt of danger and death. In the field and in close onset they press to the front, and rush headlong against the enemy, without deigning to compute either his numbers or their own. Their ranks are formed by the firm connections of consanguinity and friendship, and their martial deeds are prompted by the desire of saving or revenging their dearest companions. In their eyes retreat is a shameful flight, and flight is indelible infamy.' A nation endowed with such high and intrepid spirit must have been secure of victory, if these advantages had not been counterbalanced by many weighty defects. In the age which preceded the institution of knighthood, the Franks were rude and unskilful in the service of cavalry; and in all perilous emergencies their warriors were so conscious of their ignorance that they chose to dismount from their horses and fight on foot. Unpractised in the use of pikes, or of missile weapons, they were encumbered by the length of their swords, the weight of their armour, the magnitude of their shields, and, if I may repeat the satire of the meagre Greeks, by their unwieldy intemperance. Their independent spirit disdained the yoke of subordination, and abandoned the standard of their chief if he attempted to keep the field beyond the term of their stipulation or service. On all sides they were open to the snares of an enemy, less brave but more artful than themselves. They might be bribed, for the barbarians were venal, or surprised in the night, for they neglected the precautions of a close encampment, or vigilant sentinels. The fatigues of a summer's campaign exhausted their strength and patience, and they sank in despair if their voracious appetite was disappointed of a plentiful supply of wine and of food."

With the exception of the vice of intemperance, which is not common in the French army, how much of the above description would now apply most truly to the modern Frank, especially in regard to the war with Germany in 1870—71?

Out of this barbarian period came the decadence of infantry and military science and the dawn of the age of chivalry. From the battle of Tours may be dated the relapse of military art, and the substitution of martial ignorance, when war meant little more than the desultory combats of mailed knights on horseback, of which the chief features were hopelessly confused *mêlées* and slaughter without any intelligent aim. Dismissing, therefore, this epoch and leaving the Crusades to the poet and romance writer, I will come at once to the era when English infantry was first organised for the defence of our shores; and I believe I can show that a standing army, when constituted as a purely national institution

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as is now the case in England, can be made the surest protection for liberty, and the best shield against anarchy and the despotism of mob rule.

By whatever race Europe may have been originally conquered, this portion of the world seems to have been swept by successive tribes of adventurers from Central Asia. The so called Allophylian race was displaced by the Celts; the Sclavs then drove the Celts to the West and the Tchuds into the cold regions of the North, while the Teuton conquerors, dispossessing at will preceding nations, laid the foundation of the vast social empire which at present in Europe, in America, in Asia, and in the New World of the Southern Seas, rules the destinies of half the globe.

The usages, customs, costumes, military equipment and organisation of the Teuton conquerors of Europe, are recorded at length in the writings of the fifth, sixth, seventh, and subsequent centuries; and we can read of the various sons of Odin who settled in Germany, Gaul, Iberia, Scandinavia, and Britain, on the banks of the Rhine and in the valleys of the Loire, in the works of Sidonius Apolinerus, Bishop of Auvergn, fifth century; Precopius, secretary to Belisarius, sixth century; Agathias, a Greek historian, seventh century; Tacitus and Gregory of Tours give us the most minute descriptions of the armament and mode of warfare of these races; and we can see how largely the Ancient Britons were indebted to their continental neighbours for the fashion of their clothing and their battle equipment.

That the Britons and the Gauls came from the Scythians seems borne out from the similarity in their modes of fighting, on horseback and in chariots, from the resemblance of their customs, language, arms, names of towns, persons and places, and it becomes easy to trace, in the subsequent influences of invasion by the Romans, the Saxons and the Danes, how the continual infusion of new blood benefitted the original stock.

After the destruction of the western Roman Empire, as I have said, came the period of barbaric supremacy in Europe, and our ancestors, the ancient Britons, were amongst the greatest sufferers by this change. Under the Roman rule, order, discipline, and a military species of civilisation prevailed, and Tacitus tells us how the sons of the greatest British chieftains soon began to affect the dress and costumes of the Romans, and there can be no doubt of the loss which our island received by the enforced withdrawal of the Roman garrison, leaving the inhabitants to the pillage and rapine of the pirates and robbers who came as their successors. Sir R. Hoare tells us that the ordinary dress of the early Briton was the skin of a brindled or spotted cow, or of a beast killed in hunting, but soon after the Roman invasion we know that a close coat or shirt was worn, called by Dio a tunic, as well as loose chequered pantaloons, termed *brigis*, and called by the Romans, *bragis*, and *braccæ* hence the modern term, breeches; a head-dress called *cab* (cap),

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so termed from its resemblance to the wicker or wattled conical-shaped huts of that name, in which these primitive people lived; and shoes made of raw hide, worn when hunting the wild boar and the deer in their native forests.

The Romans in their first encounters with our British ancestors were under the impression that they lived in *puris naturalibus*, as they fought almost naked and showed that their bodies were painted or tattooed with the juice of *glastum* or *woad*. But it was their custom to discard all superfluous clothing before going into battle, as did also the Highlanders at Killicrankie and Culloden, and our sailors in naval engagements, as well as any brace of combatants in a street encounter, act on the same truly national principle, and prefer to go into action with sleeves rolled up and bare arms! Cæsar, who landed in Britain fifty-five years before the birth of Christ, and found the inhabitants of Kent the most civilised of all the Britons, differing indeed but slightly in their dress and manners from the Gauls, from whom doubtless they had acquired the arts of dressing, spinning, dyeing, and weaving wool, mentions this habit of staining their bodies to make them look dreadful in battle. His words are, "*Omnes vero se* Brittani *vitro inficiunt, quod, cæruleum efficit colorem, atque hoc horribiliori sunt in pugni adspectu.*" Of the various kinds of cloth manufactured in Gaul and Britain, one, according to Pliny and Diodorus Siculus, was made of fine wool dyed of several colours, *but in which scarlet predominated*, and woven either in stripes or cheques, and of this the Britons and Gauls made their lighter or summer garments. Here we have the undoubted origin of the plaid or tartan, literally as well as historically the "garb of old Gaul" to this day!

Over the tunic both the Gauls and the Britons wore the *sagum*, a short cloak so called by the Romans from the Celtic word *saic*, or hide. The British *sagum* was of one uniform colour, generally blue or black, but the prevailing colour in the chequered tunic and *braccæ* was red. The arms of the Britons, fashioned no doubt from those of the friendly tribes of Tyrian traders, who came to these shores, were swords, spears, and arrow heads, made with a composition of copper and tin, the hatchet or battle axe, and a flat circular shield, made, like their quivers and their boats, from wicker-work and covered with leather and metal, bosses identically the same as the Highland target. With the exception of the plumed bonnet and the tasselled sporan or purse, a Highland chief, in his full costume, with trews, plaid, dirk, and target, affords as good an illustration of an ancient Briton as can well be imagined.

But I must not linger over a subject which is almost exhaustless in its detail, but will pass on to the Anglo-Saxon and Norman periods, and we shall find that the military spirit of these hardy and warlike people guided the fashion of their dress. Both

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Saxon and Norman military and civil costume differed but little. The sword was a mark of good birth, and as such was generally worn. With the Saxons the short linen tunic was preferred to almost all other vestments, as the one in which the weapon could be the most freely used. As early as the eighth century, however, the Saxons were familiar with the tunic of ringed armour, called byrn. The cap was of the Phrygian shape, made of leather, and often bordered with metal.

The sword was two-edged, long and straight. Their weapons were of iron and consisted of long broadswords, double-edged daggers, javelins and long spears, and they used the axe, or byl, with terrible effect at Hastings. In the Norman period we find the tunic, or byrn, ringed with mail and still reaching to the knees, but called hauberk, while added to it was a cowl or hood, also covered with rings, and worn as a protection over the head, on which was placed a conical iron helmet, in some cases with a neck-piece behind. The archers were an important feature in the Norman army, and, to the neglect of this arm, which had gone somewhat out of fashion at the time in England, much of William's success may be attributed, while, after Hastings, the bow constituted the chief strength of the English lines, winning for us all our great battles against the French. The Norman lance or spear was ornamented with a small pennon or flag, called gonfalon and gonfanon, and, although 700 years have passed away, the gonfanon is still worn on the lances used by our cavalry. The Norman shield was shaped like a boy's kite, and was ornamented with fantastic devices, such as griffins, dragons, but heraldic bearings did not come into fashion till Richard I. assumed the lion as his badge. A remarkable occurrence took place in the reign of this warlike monarch, when the Bishop of Norwich appeared before a military tribunal or court martial of the period, and was punished for divers military offences committed by him as a general officer. Would such a precedent in law apply to "General" Booth, or one of his officers?

The reigns of Edward I., Edward II. and Richard II. are marked by numerous changes in military costume and armour. In the first reign the emblazoned surcoat came into more general use, ailettes, or little wings, afterwards the distinguishing badge of our light infantry corps, were worn on the knight's shoulder, and the heraldic crest became part of the helmet. The lance lost its gonfanon, which was replaced by the broader pennon first used as a military ensign. Leather gauntlets, not yet plated, came in, and the banner of the king, with the arms of England, gules, three lions passant, regardant; of St. George, argent, a cross gules; of St. Edmund, azure, three crowns or; and of St. Edward the Confessor, azure, a cross fleury between six martlets or, was emblazoned and carried in battle. Under Edward II. our archers were clad uniformly, armour was made

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much lighter and of better proof plate, superseding ringed metal, and, in the following reign, the Order of the Garter was instituted, and firearms and cannon were used in the expedition against Scotland in 1337, at Puy Guillaume in 1338, and at Créci in 1346. Under Edward III. we find the first record of English soldiers being clothed in a tunic and mantle by order of the king, while the accounts for the purchase of cloth were charged to the Treasury. From Rymer's *Foedera* we learn the terms and manner of raising the English army in 1415 for the invasion of France by Henry V. Contracts were made by the Keeper of the Privy Seal with different lords and gentlemen who bound themselves to serve, with a certain number of men for a year, at the following rates of pay, *viz.*, a duke, 13*s.* 4*d.*; an earl, 6*s.* 8*d.*; a baron or banneret, 4*s.*; a knight, 2*s.*; an esquire, 1*s.*; an archer, 6*d.*; and each contractor received 100 marks for every 36 men-at-arms. Speed tells us that the king made a compact or treaty with the "Prior of Kilmainham" by which the latter enlisted for service in the English army 1,600 Irish Kernes, "able men, but almost naked, their horses small and without saddles, yet they were as nimble as light cavalry, and played with the French in spoiling the country, rifling houses and carrying away children, with their baggage on cows' backs." This may be cited as another example of history repeating itself, if we refer to our present Parliamentary records and Mr. Parnell. In 1432 several kinds of artillery began to be mentioned, bombardes, vulgaires, culverins. The vulgaires meant ordinary artillery, while that of the Turks was held in greatest esteem. Mines were used by the Turks which led to countermines by the Christians, and after a siege of fifty-three days, Constantinople, which had defied the power of Chrosroes, the Chagan, and the Caliphs, was subdued by the arms of Mahomet II. I have said that the love of dress is often associated with the most soldierlike qualities and the most daring valour. We remember the murder of Alcibiades and how desperate was his defence in the garden before he was slain by the arrows of the assassins, who dared not close with him; and coming to Richard III. of England, we shall find that in his short reign magnificence of military decoration was universal, while the king and the Duke of Buckingham were celebrated for their taste in dress and armour. No higher degree of perfection in armour was ever attained than during this reign; the pauldrons almost assumed the later appearance of the pass guards; the knee and elbow pieces were much longer, fan-shaped and of elaborate workmanship, and the magnificence of the collection in the Meyrick and other galleries cannot be surpassed in any other reign. The king, like our own Nelson, went into battle conspicuous in all the pride of decoration. He wore the most gorgeously plated armour and his crown above his helmet at Bosworth, where, having killed several knights, he at last saw Richmond, and spurring his horse forward he slew Sir William Brandon, the bearer of the hostile

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standard, struck to the ground Sir John Cheney and two men at arms who interposed, and made a desperate blow at his rival before he was overpowered by numbers and slain.

In the reign of Henry VII. fifty archers were enrolled as yeomen of the king's guard, to attend him and his successors for ever, and this may be considered the first formation of a regular standing army in our country. Every yeomen of this band was to be of the best quality next to gentry, well made and fully six feet high. They were clothed in a shirt of mail with short, wide sleeves, but they wore over this a small vest of *red cloth*, laced in front, with pantaloons or light hose on their legs, and braces on their left arms. Here we have the undoubted origin of our national uniform of scarlet colour, and of the "thin red line" which has borne so many years the brunt of the battle and the breeze. The conduct of these English Archers of the Guard at their first engagement, under the Lords Daubeny and Morley, is worthy of notice here. At the battle of Dixmude, in 1489, they attacked the French camp, though defended by a strong battery, poured a volley of arrows into the trenches, fell on the ground till the guns had been discharged, rose on their feet, poured in a second volley, and rushed precipitately into the camp. Such was the resolution of these troops, that John Person, of Coventry, having lost his leg by a cannon shot, continued to discharge his arrows kneeling or sitting, and when the Frenchmen fled, he cried out to one of his fellows, "Have thou these six arrows I have left, and follow then the chase, for I may not!" The uniform of the other English soldiers of this reign was white with a red cross, and at the battle of Fourrone, in 1495, there were German arquebusiers on horse and foot. The arquebuse soon after was improved, and was called the hackbutt. Henry VIII. was in his youth a good soldier, having learnt the art of war as a volunteer with the Emperor Maximilian; he adopted troops called lansquenets, used by the emperor, and maintained 2,000 of these soldiers; field pieces were used in this reign and divided into twelve pounders, culverins, falconet, falcon, minions, sakers, &c., and the first English maker of ordnance was one John Owen, who made brass ordnance for the king.

As Henry VII. organised the first permanent royal guard, to "Bluff King Hal" England owes the first permanent body of cavalry, denominated "the band of Gentleman Pensioners." The king's idea was to form an honourable body guard, on which he could rely, and to create, at the same time, a nursery for the officers of his army. The dress of Henry VIII.'s soldiers was a uniform of blue cloth, guarded with red, with hose of right leg red and left blue. In this reign the use of gunpowder and the improvements in gunnery almost supplanted the cross bow; the small arms of the period were hand guns, arquebuses, demi-haques and pistols, while a species of artillery was invented called war carts, each

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carrying two pierriers or chambered pieces, and several are represented in the picture of the siege of Boulogne. The oldest volunteer corps in the world, the Honourable Artillery Company of London, was instituted by Henry VIII. in 1537, for the encouragement of archery, although its earliest patent of incorporation in its present form is dated 3rd of King James, in 1606.

The coats of Henry VIII.'s soldiers were white, but Elizabeth changed the colour to red, and, although the footmen wore red green or russet in Ireland, the cavalry had red *cloaks*, lined, without sleeves and of length to the knee. Few if any changes were made in armour or equipment by the unwarlike James I., whose *mot* however was characteristic, when he observed, speaking of armour, "that it was an excellent invention, as it not only protected the wearer, but prevented him from hurting anybody else." The costumes, civil and military, of Charles I. have been deemed the most elegant and picturesque ever adopted in England, and they doubtless owe much of their popularity to the pencil and the palette of Vandyke. Armour began to be neglected and a cuirass over a buff coat satisfied most noblemen and officers, though the heavy cavalry and pikemen still wore helmets, back and breastplates, greaves and tassets. Dragoons, first raised in France in 1600 by the Marshal de Brisac, were now part of the English army, and, in a treatise published at Cambridge, called *Militaire Instructions for the Cavalry*, dated 1632, we find the force divided into four classes: "The lancier, the cuirassier, the harqueboure and carbine, and the Dragone." The lancier and cuirassier were heavily armed, and all were dressed in buff coats, but with *red* scarves as the Royal colour.

We all know how fond of magnificence in dress was "Good Queen Bess," and Stubbs assures us that in this reign, no people in the world were "so curious in new fangles" as the English. Armour, in this reign, was seldom worn lower than the hips, and complete suits were seldom worn except for jousting; while fire-arms came steadily into fashion, carabines, petronels, and dragons are frequently mentioned. The petronel was so named from *poitronal*, being fired from the chest; the dragon from having a dragon's head on the muzzle, and the troops who used it, fought on foot as well as mounted and were called dragoons.

I now propose tracing British uniforms from the period of Bluff King Hal to our present day, and to show that the abolition of our cherished and national uniform would be most injurious to the recruiting of our regiments. Our traditional colour has won honour and renown, in all climes and ages, therefore I say with Cicero, "What is honourable must be becoming, and what is becoming should be honourable"—*Quod decet honestum est, et quod honestum est decet.*

To the lover of the picturesque in military costume, the temptation to linger over the annals and records of the Charles I.

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period, is excusably strong. All Europe contributed its quota to the fashion of the epoch. Charles wrote in 1840 a military code and a treatise upon the equipment of his troops, and this led to another work in 1843, by the Earl of Essex, for the use of the Parliamentary army, but it may be noted that the King was all for uniformity of colour and armour, while the Roundheads were allowed to wear what they pleased. At the commencement of the Civil War, dress and fashion were important political elements, and the costume of England was as divided as its opinions. The garb of the cavalier was gallant and picturesque in the extreme, and it can never be forgotten while Vandyke and his paintings are remembered in the original, or at the hands of the engraver. The military beau or dandy of the period of James I. is made by Ben Jonson, in his comedy of the "New Inn," to say—

"I would put on
The Savoy chain about my neck, the ruff,
The cuffs of Flanders, then the Naples hat
With the Rome hat band and the Florentine agate,
The Milan sword, the cloak of Geneva set
With Brabant buttons, all my given pieces.
My gloves of Madrid, &c., &c."

Charles I., however, and his Court, set the fashion of a better taste in costume both for war and peace. The doublet of the Cavalier was a silk, satin or velvet, with large loose sleeves slashed up the front, the collar covered by a falling band of rich point lace, with that peculiar edge now called Vandyke; a short cloak was worn carelessly on one shoulder, while the long breeches, fringed or pointed, nearly met the top of the wide boots, which were also ruffled with lace or lawn; a broad-leafed Flemish beaver hat, with a rich hat-band and plumes of feathers, was set on one side of the head, and a Spanish rapier hung from a most magnificent baldric, a sword-belt worn over the right shoulder. On campaign, however, much of this finery was discarded and the doublet of silk or velvet was exchanged for a buff coat richly laced, over which the cuirass was worn, while a broad silk or satin scarf was tied in a large bow over or behind the hip. In a delightful work, the *Memoirs and Correspondence of Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, the equipment of this period is thus described: "Prince Rupert, after defeating the garrison at Rhenins, which he had wantonly provoked, resumed his march, a picturesque array, accoutred in the old chivalric fashion, with plumed helmet and bright armour over a leathern doublet, steel cuisses to the knee, and huge gambadoes with the large knightly spur. Tall, powerful horses, such as Wonvermans has left us, stepped proudly under their caparisons, and the small cornet or flag that fluttered over the head of each troop gave a liveliness to the glaring column, as it wound along the wild plains of Hanover. The few infantry belonging to the army were armed with the pike, arquebuse or musket, steel cap and corslet." The strength of the army in England in 1652,

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cavalry and infantry, was 31,519 men, exclusive of officers, and the army of Ireland amounted to nearly 20,000, making a total standing army of nearly 50,000 men. The Protector afterwards reduced it to 30,000 men. In those days the foot soldiers had commonly 1*s.* a day, and the horse 2*s.* 6*d.*; an ensign received 1*s.* 6*d.*; a lieutenant 2*s.*; and a captain 4*s.*; so that the private seems to have been much better paid than his officer, or indeed than he is now, since we must remember that all the necessaries of life were at least six times as cheap as they are now.

During the interregnum of military terror and "iron-clad government," which Carlyle and Macaulay call liberty, and when England was under Puritan rule, the costume of the people as well as the army was ridiculously ugly and grotesque, but, with the restoration of the Stuarts, fashion regained the throne from which she had been so long banished. A contemporary account of Charles II.'s entry into London will give some idea of the splendour of the pageant: "All the streets being richly hanged with tapestry, and a lane made by the militia forces to London Bridge, from London Bridge to Temple Bar, by the train bands on the one side, and the several companies in their liveries on the other side of the rails; from Temple Bar to Westminster by the militia forces, regiments of the army, and several gentlemen officers of the king's army, led by Sir John Stawell. First came a troop of gentlemen, led by Major-General Brown, brandishing their swords, in cloth of silver doublets, in all about 300, besides their servants; then another troop, led by Alderman Robinson, with buff coats, silver sleeves and green scarves; after this a troop, with blue liveries and silver lace—colors, red, fringed with silver, about 130; after that a troop, 6 trumpets, 7 footmen in sea green and silver—their colours, pink, fringed with silver; then a troop, with their liveries gray and blew, with silk and silver laces, 30 footmen, 4 trumpets, consisting of about 220—their colors, sky, fringed with silver; another of gray liveries, 6 trumpets, colors—sky and silver of about 105 gentlemen; another troop of 70 gentlemen, 5 trumpets—colors, sky and silver; another troop, led by the Lord Cleveland, of about 200 noblemen and gentlemen—colors, blew, fringed with gold; another troop of about 100—black colors fringed with gold; and another troop of about 300, colors not described.

"After these came 2 trumpets with His Majestie's arms, the Sheriff's men in red cloaks and silver lace, with half pikes, 79 in number; then followed the companies of London, with their several streamers, all in black velvet coats, with gold chains, every company having their footmen of their several liveries, some red and white, some pink and white, some blew and yellow, &c. Three trumpets in liveries richly laced and cloth of silver sleeves went before the company of the Mercers. After all these came a kettledrum, 5 trumpets, and 3 streamers,

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and very rich red liveries with silver lace. The number of the citizens was about 600. After these 12 ministers, another kettle-drum, 4 trumpets. Then His Majestie's life guard, led by Lord Gerard; another party led by Sir Gilbert Gerard and Major Rosecarron; and the third division by Colonel Pragues. Then 3 trumpeters in rich coats and satin doublets; the City Marshal, with 8 footmen in French green, trimmed with crimson and white; the City Waits, the City Officers in order, Dr. Warmstry, the two Sheriffs, and all the Aldermen in their scarlett gowns and rich trappings, with footmen in liveries, red coats, laced with silver and cloth of gold; the heralds and maces (mace-bearers) in their rich coats; the Lord Mayor, bare(-headed), carrying the sword; His Excellency the Duke of Buckingham bare; and then the glory of all, His Sacred Majesty, rode between the Dukes of York and Gloucester. Afterwards followed a troop, bare, with white colors; then the general life guard; after which, another company of gentry—sky, fringed with gold; after which, five regiments of the army horse, led by Colonel Knight, *viz.*:—His Excellencies (General Monk's) regiment, Colonel Knight's, Colonel Cloberries', Lord Fanconberg's, Lord Howard's. After which came two troops of nobility and gentlemen—red colors, fringed with gold."

Charles II. disbanded Oliver Cromwell's army with much reluctance, but fears of infidelity and the advantage of retaining a military force of his own formation, officered by known royalists, prevailed over other considerations. The Life Guards, consisting of two regiments, were first raised, the privates consisting of gentlemen who had followed the fortunes of Charles I. during the Civil War, and the high privileges they obtained were continued long after the time when they ceased to be composed of the same class of men. The Life Guards were raised in 1661; the Horse Guards Blue, or Oxford Blues, in the same year, and so called from being raised by the Earl of Oxford. The Coldstream Guards date their formation from 1660, when two regiments were added to the one raised by General Monk, about ten years previously, at Coldstream on the Scotch border. The First Foot Guards (Grenadiers) and the 3rd Scots Guards, were formed the same year. The First Royal Scots were brought over from France at the Restoration; the Second (Queen's) were raised in 1661, as a garrison for Tangier, part of the dowry of the Infanta of Portugal, on her marriage with Charles II. In 1661, Lord Churchill also raised a regiment, termed "The English Horse," for service against the Moors at Tangiers—this is now the 1st Royal Dragoons. The next corps in point of seniority is the 3rd Buffs, originally in the service of Holland, and so called from their accoutrements being composed of buffalo leather—they date from 1665. The 6th Royal Warwickshire Regiment was raised in 1671; the 5th Northumberland Fusiliers in 1674, and the North British Fusiliers (lately the 21st), in 1678. These regiments obtained their name

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of Fusiliers, from their carrying the fusil, a firelock lighter than the musket, invented in France. in 1630. The 4th, or King's Own, were embodied in 1680, and in the following year were formed the Scots Greys (2nd Dragoons). In 1663 Lord Dartmouth, by the king's order, evacuated and blew up our useless possession, Tangiers, and from the return of the garrison and the quartering of troops throughout the kingdom, may be dated the formation of the standing army, the whole of which was reviewed on Putney Heath on the 1st of October, 1864, amounting to 4,000 men, and commanded by the Earl of Craven. At this period the army was ordered to be provided as follows:—The defensive arms of cavalry a back, breast, and pott, the breast and pott to be pistol proof; the offensive arms a sword and a case of pistols, the barrels thereof not to be under fourteen inches in length; the furniture of the horse to be a great saddle with burrs and straps, also with straps to affix the holsters into, a bit and bridle with a pectoral and crupper. In the foot the musketeer to have a musket, the barrel whereof not to be less than three feet in length, and the gauge of the bore not be less than twelve bullets to the pound; a collar of bandoliers and a sword. A pikeman, whose pike was made of ash, not under sixteen feet long, with a back, breast, hand-piece, and a sword. The tallest and strongest men were selected for the pike, which was the weapon of English infantry from the reign of Edward IV. to that of George II. The pike was introduced into France by the Switzers in the reign of Louis XI., being merely the lance or spear of the cavalry adapted to infantry.

In 1684 the 18th Royal Irish Regiment was raised, and in 1685 the first six regiments of Dragoon Guards, the 3rd and 4th Dragoons (now Hussars) were formed, as also were nine infantry regiments, from 7th Fusiliers to 15th Regiment inclusive; while at this time we first hear of Grenadier companies, so called from the men being armed with hand grenades; Carabineers, so called from the firearm they carried, were raised by James II. and wore breast and back plates, with iron skull caps sewn in the crown of cocked hats—their armament was the sword, pistols, and the carbine slung behind by a belt and a swivel; the Dragoons and Dragoon Guards were armed with firelocks and bayonets, as well as swords and pistols, and were trained to fight either on foot or on horse-back. The 7th Dragoon Guards, the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons, and the 16th, 17th, 19th, 20th and 23rd regiments of infantry were raised in 1688, while in the year following the Mutiny Act, for the discipline, regulation, and payment of the army, passed on the 12th of April. The prices of clothing for the army in James II.'s time were: a footman, £2 13s.; a dragoon, £6 10s.; a horseman, £9; horse grenadier, £8. Charles, at the beginning of his reign, had about 5,000 men in guards and garrisons, and at the end of his life the number was increased to 8,000. James,

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at Monmouth's rebellion, had almost 15,000 troops, and when the Prince of Orange landed, no less than 30 regular soldiers were available. I have dealt somewhat minutely upon this period of history, as under the Stuarts we shall find not only the introduction of standing armies, but the gradual approach to uniformity in clothing and equipment, which is now a *sine quâ non* in all civilised armies. I have said already that, in the reign of Henry VII., the yeomen archers of the guard wore red, and we find that, in 1526, the coats of all the yeomen of the household were to be made of red cloth. A MS. in the College of Arms contains the orders of the Duke of Norfolk to the conductor of the "waward" of an army raised in the 36 of Henry VIII. respecting the clothing of the soldiers. The contents and spelling are quaint. "Furst, every man sowdyer to have a coat of blew clothe, after suche fashion as all fotemen's cotes be made here at London, to serve His Majestie in this jorney, and that the same be garded (*i.e.*, ornamented, laced, or fringed) with redde clothe, after such sort as others be made here, and the best sené (*i.e.*, the best-looking man) to be trimmed after such sort as shall please the captain to devise." In the same MS. I find it recorded that "no man of this armye to come within the circuit of the campe oneless he have a red crosse of Saynt George sew'd upon his uppermost garment, upon payne of 15 days' imprisonment." In Mary's time the English army was clothed in white with the red cross, while in that of Elizabeth a change was made to blue, while the artificers of the army were clothed in red, although the actual Tudor liveries were white and green. A body of troops levied at the expense of the City of London in 1585, and sent to serve in the Low Countries, were supplied with red coats, and the uniform cloaks of the cavalry were the same colour. At the commencement of the terrible Civil War no particular colour of soldiers' coats distinguished the antagonistic parties—red and blue, grey, green, and black were worn indiscriminate by both sides. As a rule the regiments wore the colours of the livery of their respective Colonels, as Sir William Constable's blue coats, Lord Roberts' red coats, Colonel Meyrick's grey coats, Lord Saye's blue coats. The red regiment of the Parliament had been surprised by the king at Brentford, and the "grey coats" shortly acquired the character of "most exquisite plunderers." Sir John Suckling, who raised a troop of horse at great expense, and whose vanity, it is said, was greater than his military prowess, clothed his men in a brilliant uniform, consisting of a white doublet, a scarlet coat, and a hat with a scarlet feather. The king's "Life Guard of Foot" was a "crack" regiment, and also clothed in red; and Prince Rupert, it is not generally known, had likewise a "Life Guard of Foot," all in red coats. Scarves were worn across the shoulders as a distinguishing emblem; those of the king's side being white, while Essex's were orange. At Edgehill the king was dressed in a black velvet coat, lined with

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ermine, and a steel cap covered with velvet. Prince Rupert was clad in scarlet, richly laced with silver. I may remark once more that the use of scarlet clothing for troops dates from a very early period. Lycurgus ordered the Lacedæmonians to clothe their soldiers with it, and the probable reasons for this solution would be because the color is both soonest imbibed by cloth, and most lasting and durable, while, from its brightness and splendour, it conduced to raise the spirits of the men, and was therefore most suitable to the shock of battle, and finally, it was supposed to conceal the stains of blood, a sight which might dispirit the raw and inexperienced soldier. Julius Ferratus, a Venetian author who wrote on military subjects in the sixteenth century, tells us: "Adsint et in exercitu militaria indumenta, et vestes pro usu militum, et pro bello, quæ parva, et brevia sunt sagula, sive fagia dicta rubri colores, *ne ita videatur sanguis vulneratorum in prœlio* ut nec sibi et aliis pugnantibus pavore incruciat" (De Re et Disc. Mil, 1575, p. 75).

Earl Stanhope, in his *Miscellanies*, publishes a question he submitted to Lord Macaulay, then Secretary of War, as to "when the British army was for the first time clothed in red,"—an inquiry which, the noble author states, had been addressed to him by no less a personage than the Duke of Wellington. Lord Stanhope imagined it to have been in the reign of Charles II., but the Duke seemed to think that it was earlier, and that Monk's troops, for example, were *Red coats*. The following was the reply of the great historian, with whose opinion, with great deference, I can only partially agree:

"Right Hon. T. B. Macaulay to Lord Mahon.

"Albany, May 19th, 1851.

"DEAR MAHON,

The Duke is certainly right. The Army of the Commonwealth was clothed in red" (p. 99).

The fact is, red was partially the national as well as the royal colour, and as such there were red regiments on both sides during the latter portion of the Civil War. Sir John Suckling, as I have said, raised a troop of horse for the king, and dressed them in scarlet, my own ancestor, John Ashe, member for Freshford, and a personal friend of the Protector, with his brother, Edward Ashe, M.P. for Heytsbury, raised and equipped a troop of horse for the Parliament, and clothed them in red, and on more than one occasion made a good thing out of their zeal, as Cromwell gave them several contracts for clothing the Parliamentary troops. The City regiments and trained bands of this period wore white, yellow, green, and orange, and were armed with the musket and the pike.

(*To be continued.*)

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AN INCIDENT.

A WOMAN'S slight form was lying
Face down o'er a fresh raised mound,
Where all that her heart held dearest,
Lay hid in the cold, damp ground.

A desolate heart was weeping
In grief too bitter for tears,
And craving strength for endurance
Of life, through the coming years.

Passionate, yearning, heart-broken,
She cries, in her wild despair,
To one who has passed for ever
Beyond all hearing of prayer.

God help her! poor stricken mourner,
There human comfort is vain,
To lift the shadow of suff'ring,
Or lighten the cross of pain.

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THEATRICAL TRAITORS.

THE class of characters known as *troisièmes rôles* on the French dramatic or melo-dramatic stage, comprises a set of inferior personages—we can hardly call them subordinate—who excite our dislike rather than our interest. Their business is, first, to complicate the plot; secondly, their discomfiture is needful to the final unravelling of the intrigue, when persecuted innocence is triumphant, baseness exposed and punished, and long-tried lovers brought together. We might, therefore, fairly entertain the opinion that *troisièmes rôles*, instead of being third, should, from their practical importance, be raised to the rank of first parts. They are the seasoning, the salt, the pepper and mustard, which give flavour to otherwise insipid productions. Nevertheless, few actors, and still fewer actresses, like to undertake a *troisième rôle*—when they can help it; although, now and then, a really great actor will sacrifice his own individual personality and penchants, for the sake of giving completeness to a theatrical performance, and will devote his talents to the perfecting of what is styled by critics "an ungrateful part."

"In Monsieur J. B. Laglaize's recent clever volume, *Figurines Dramatiques*, the careers of artists in various lines of the drama are amusingly—if sometimes a little broadly—sketched. He has no fear of laying on colour where it will tell. And his opportunities as manager in not a few capitals of the civilized world gave him the power of producing striking portraits of each class, sufficiently generalised in their leading features to avoid the charge of being caricatures of any special individual. One of the best of these sketches—necessarily abbreviated here—is his account of how an ambitious young man may come to settle down as a *troisième rôle*.

Young Berluron's father was an amateur numismatist, whose collection of coins, valued by himself at 500,000 francs, fetched, after his death, scarcely 1,250, just the worth of the metal. They proved to be the work of an antiquity-maker, residing in the Rue Saint-Jacques, Paris.

Young Berluron, left all but penniless, was subsequently accommodated with board and lodging by his uncle, Giboulard, a gouty, miserly, self-willed septuagenarian—in other respects an excellent person—and a childless widower besides, with an income of 20,000 francs, amassed by speculating in oils—the third of which income more than met his expenditure in the little

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town of B——, in the south of France. The lad's amusements were limited to taking the old gentleman out for a walk in the morning, sharing his game of dominoes in the afternoon, and listening in the evening to his account of the Battle of the Pyramids, in which his right ear had been cut off by a Mameluke. Ever since that ear had been deaf, especially when he was asked for money.

Such a life naturally seemed at last a little dull for a fine young man of two-and-twenty, ardent and poetic by temperament, who passed part of his nights in scribbling verses and in creating *dramatis personæ*, situations, and *dénouements*. One day the nephew resolutely declared that B—— was too obscure a locality for his muse, and that he must betake himself to Paris, where he was sure to become a literary celebrity. In spite of his gout, the uncle jumped up with surprise; and as the nephew was obstinate, the good man sent him off on his way, with a hearty malediction for his pocket money.

Berluron's purse was light, but his literary baggage was formidable: three tragedies, two romances, four dramas, three comedies, and one collection of songs and fugitive poetry. In his own estimation, all the publishers of Paris were certain to compete for this literary stock. He already fancied himself famous, rich, courted, influential. Some of us, perhaps, have been ourselves attacked by the same form of hallucination. He had not to wait long for the reality. Nobody would have anything to say to his wares.

Leaving his *hôtel*, therefore, he hired an eighth-story chamber in the Rue des Grès, and wrote to his uncle Giboulard. He sold his books, resolving to live on bread with the produce, until his uncle's answer should arrive. Every morning he bought a two-sou roll of the nearest bakeress, Madame Fridolin, a very pretty and pleasing young widow, more delicate, but not less fascinating, than Raffael's Italian bakeress, the famous Fornarina. Every evening he made the same purchase for his dinner. The lovely lady seemed to guess his position, and perhaps even to feel some sympathy for it. With her own fair hand she slowly selected his roll, always choosing the whitest and especially the biggest. On no account would he have bought bread elsewhere.

Meanwhile, old Giboulard failed to give the slightest sign of life. Consequently, for the eleventh time, Berluron called on Daddy Brulot, the manager of the Théâtre Montparnasse, to propose the performance of one of his dramas.

"You here again!" cried Daddy Brulot. "*Sarpejeu!* my boy, if you have half as much talent as you have persistence, you ought to succeed to your heart's content. But you are in luck to-day. I have no rehearsal. Sit down there, and read me a bit of your little affair."

Berluron did not wait to be asked twice. He unrolled his

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manuscript and began. Brulot settled himself comfortably in an arm-chair, with the air of a man resigned to his fate. At first he shut his eyes, seemingly oppressed with drowsiness; then he opened one eye; then the other, attentively examining the young reader in front of him. "Ha! hum!" he muttered to himself; "a strapping fellow! well built! sufficient muscle! striking features! sarcastic sneer! sepulchral tones!—he's the very thing: he will play my *troisièmes rôles* like a fallen angel." "My lad," he said, interrupting the reader, "your drama is simply idiotic. It is as full of hisses as it can stick. Take my advice. Give up authorship, and turn to acting."

"I fancied, nevertheless, that my piece——"

"Listen an instant. Last night, in the grand duel of the 'Frères Corses,' my *troisième rôle* met with an accident which has laid him up. Will you take his place?"

"Impossible. I have never set foot on the boards."

"Never mind that. I am sure you will suit. I will put 'La Tour de Nesle' on the bills for to-morrow. You shall play *Orsini* and *Landry*."

"Two parts in the same piece!"

"I haven't a company like the Théâtre Français. Besides, it is your interest to try them both. If you fail in the first, you will make up for it in the second. Here is the book. Come to rehearsal to-morrow morning. Good-bye."

Berluron's double *début* was a complete success. Daddy Brulot was so enchanted with it, that he made him sign on the spot an engagement for a year at thirty-five francs per month, with ten sous for extras. It was not exactly opulence; but in 1847, with that salary, great economy, an opportunist stomach, and extras, a young man could still escape being starved to death by cold and hunger.

Berluron's second *début* was in "Celina ou l'Enfant du Mystère," in which he played both the traitor *Truguelin* and the gendarme sent to arrest the said traitor. Clad in *Truguelin's* shabby and tattered costume, he exclaimed, staring hard at the left wing, "Heavens! I perceive, far off in the distance, a gendarme advancing in this direction. There is danger in the wind. It is time to fly!" And he fled accordingly, rushing off by the right wing. Then the orchestra set up a vigorous *tremolo*, giving him time to run across the stage behind the scenes, and, while doing so, to pull off the ragged smock-frock under which he wore the gendarme's costume. Then he entered majestically from the left, sword in hand, saying, "At last, thank heaven, I have arrested the culprit."

Henceforth, his theatrical career was clear before him. He felt that villainy and treachery were his destiny. Unnatural sons, pitiless usurers, philosophical murderers, jealous lovers, cynical executioners, cruel husbands, were the personages with whom he

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was to be identified. Poor Berluron, so kind-hearted and honest, was forced by fate to spend his time in outraging morality, transgressing the laws, bearing false-witness, and the like satanic occupations, throughout six acts and twenty-one tableaux, preceded by a prologue and followed by an epilogue, written in fantastic language, composed of outrageous adjectives and incoherent metaphors—all for thirty-five francs per month and ten sous for extras.

In other respects Daddy Brulot did his duty by his young recruit. Every evening he attended in the wings to give valuable hints as to diction and manner, to calm down superabundant energy or to stimulate the weaker points in his acting, to temper exaggerated expression or give the spur to flagging moments. Thanks to these judicious counsels, Berluron soon became the star of the Théâtre Montparnasse, the favourite of the public—though in a peculiar way. He performed his villainous parts with such truthful conviction as to call forth the groans and execrations of the whole house. Every one of his phrases was received with polite remarks, such as "Oh, the wretch! The scamp! The abominable rascal!" which concert of invectives went on *crescendo*, until the persecuted victim, the innocent and interesting orphan girl, was reinstated in her legal and social rights, and the detestable author of all her sorrows received just retribution, amid a shower of half-eaten apples, orange-peel, walnuts, and sausage ends.

"What talent!" complacently murmured Daddy Brulot. "Decidedly, in engaging him, I knew what I was about. It is impossible to be more skilfully ignoble, more artistically repulsive. The public are so fond of him that they cannot bear the sight of him."

Uncle Giboulard remained more deaf and dumb than ever. Berluron had to perform miracles of economy and abstinence, in order to make two ends meet. His daily meals invariably consisted of the penny roll which he continued to buy of his Fornarina, now more handsome and gracious than ever. Note that this was at the beginning of February, 1848. With such brilliant success, Berluron naturally thought that he might ask for a slight increase of salary. He broached the subject to the *régisseur*, the stage manager, an old carbonaro, who confidently replied, "My good fellow, I know you are not a traitor *off* the stage, and I therefore inform you that in less than a month our theatre will be closed. Electoral reform is in the wind. A political hurricane is brewing. If you have money in the funds," he added with a smile, "sell out, my boy. It is not a bit too soon."

The carbonaro, being in the secret, turned out a true prophet. A few days afterwards the streets of Paris were broken up with barricades, and on the door of Brulot's theatre was posted a notice, "RELACHE, *pour cause de Révolution*."

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At such an unpromising and gloomy time Berluron's financial position was this: instead of having money in the funds, he owed two quarters' rent of his chamber, twenty francs to his tailor, twelve francs to his bootmaker, and three francs to his washerwoman. In coin, he possessed a ten-sou bit. He was entering the house in the Rue des Grès, "alone, unfriended, melancholy, slow," on tip-toe, to escape his porteress's, Madame Camouflet's, angry looks and pungent observations; but her sharp eyes perceived his stealthy transit.

"Mossieu!" she screamed, "here's a letter for you, from B——. 'Tis twenty sous," she added, holding out her hand; "one franc."

That was then the cost of a letter from B——, for we had not yet achieved postage stamps, still less post-cards and electric telegraphs.

Berluron, after inspecting the letter, returned it to her with a deep sigh.

"Mossieu does not take his letter?" the old woman sharply inquired.

"Not now; bye-and-bye," he sadly answered.

"What does he do with all his money?" muttered Mother Camouflet, as soon as his back was turned, while she replaced the letter in the frame of her looking-glass. "Sure enough, them *artisses* are a rum lot, every one of them. But a fellow like him, who gives his porteress two francs for her *étrennes*, a shabby two francs, is capable of any wickedness."

Berluron passed a sleepless night pacing up and down his chamber, like a lion in his cage. "This letter," he growled, "has come to save me from ruin! My uncle, touched by my theatrical fame, has rewarded me with a handsome remittance; and now, for the want of twenty sous, I cannot get it out of that old wretch's claws! Stupid post-office; venal administration! I understand now why revolutions happen."

Early next morning, not knowing what to do, he descended the eight flights of stairs which led to the street. All his saleable articles were in pawn, and the tickets sold. Madame Camouflet was sweeping the gutter. "Will mossieu take his letter?" she asked, with a grin. Berluron hurried past without replying, and went straight to Madame Fridolin's for his daily roll.

"Good heavens!" she said, looking at him with astonished eyes; "are you ill, Monsieur Berluron? You work too hard," she added, giving the change for his ten-sou piece. "You must take more care of yourself."

"It is nothing—nothing," stammered Berluron; "the fresh air will soon set me right." He pocketed his change and made his bow. After eating his bread in the Luxembourg Garden, he started in search of a friend and a franc. At three in the afternoon he had wandered over half Paris, without finding either

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the one or the other. At last, in the Rue de Faubourg Montmartre, at what is aptly called *le carrefour des écrasés*, the "knock 'em down and run over 'em" crossing, he was hailed by a familiar voice.

"You, Antonin!" he said. "What are *you* doing in Paris?"

"Well, I ought to be studying law; but as nature has gifted me with a lovely tenor voice, I have thrown up the Code for the Solfeggio, with the intention of shining at the opera."

"But what does your father say to that?"

"*Mon père, tu m'as dû maudire!*" he sang, regardless of the passing crowd. "Papa has cruelly drawn both his heart-strings and his purse-strings as tight as he can."

"Exactly like my uncle."

"But I am coming out soon in 'Guillaume Tell.' How he will open his eyes when he hears of my success!"

"In that case," said Berluron, in winning tones, "could you lend me twenty sous?"

"Quite impossible, my dear fellow. '*Oui, l'or n'est qu' une chimère,*'" again singing at the top of his voice. "I was going to ask you for forty or fifty francs, but it seems that I am done. Give me your address, all the same. I will send you a stall for the night of my *début*."

Berluron, completely upset, continued his wanderings without knowing whither he went. Nightfall found him in the Place de la Bastille. A poor woman, with a baby in arms, asked him for charity. He smiled bitterly at the idea of *his* bestowing alms; it was what is called the irony of circumstances. Nevertheless, he drew a sou from his pocket and put it into the mendicant's hand. When about to turn up the Rue Saint-Antoine, he heard the same woman calling after him, "Monsieur! monsieur!"

"But I have just given you something—what I could," he said.

"Yes; but you have no doubt made a mistake!"

"How so?"

"You have given me a two-franc piece."

"That is materially impossible."

"It must be as I tell you, for I have taken nothing all day long. You were the first to handsel me."

Berluron could not help admiring the poor woman's inborn honesty. Her conduct was even noble—worthy of all praise. In the warmth of his appreciation, he kissed the baby and emptied into her hand all the remaining sous.

"Thank you, my good monsieur," she exclaimed. "Thank you much. May it bring you luck!"

He was running off in the direction of his lodging, when a sudden scruple arrested him. "Where could it come from, this

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two-franc piece? Ah, I have it now! The Fornarina, in giving me change, must have accidentally taken up this two-franc piece together with the copper money. In that case, I cannot do otherwise than return it. But then, my letter! So it must be. It is not to be helped. There is no choice in the matter. A beggar woman shall not beat me in honesty."

When he entered the Fornarina's shop she blushed "celestial rosy red, love's proper hue"; but he was too full of his own affairs and troubles to notice her flattering emotion. "Madame, I have come," he said, "to return a two-franc piece you gave me by mistake."

"I really cannot take that money," she answered, with an effort to appear quite calm.

"But it belongs to you, nevertheless."

"No, it does not; I—I think not," she stammered, blushing still more deeply. "I have just counted up my cash, and the amount is perfectly correct. It is you who have made the mistake."

"I? No. I am certain I am right." But he began to conceive a slight suspicion of the fair Fornarina's kindly motive. So he ran off at once to his porteress's lodge. "My letter, if you please," he said, majestically tossing the two-franc piece on the table.

"There are three letters for you now," said Madame Camouflet; "three!"—Berluron turned pale at the thought that his two francs would now be insufficient—"but two of them are Paris letters." Berluron breathed again.

He opened the letter from B——, and read:

"My dear Berluron,

"Your uncle Giboulard is dead. He had not altered the will which he made in your favour while you were residing with him. Everything comes to you. Accept my hearty congratulations.

"Ever yours,

"Cristol."

Berluron fell fainting into Madame Camouflet's arms; but her vinegar voice soon brought him to. With returning consciousness he began singing and dancing, forcing the old woman to waltz round her little room. "Let me alone," she gasped and panted. "Do! Don't! Are you seized with an attack of monomental alienation?"

"Oh, Madame Camouflet, just one round more! I am rich; very, very rich. I have come into twenty thousand francs a year."

Madame Camouflet felt remorse when she remembered her past unkindnesses. She handed him the second letter with an

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attempted smile, which, for want of practice, brought on an awful squint. The second epistle ran thus:

"My dear Pays,

"I have received some unexpected cash. You can have your twenty sous; forty, if you like.

"Your affectionate fellow-countryman,

"Antonin."

"It never rains, but it pours," said Berluron.

"What, another legacy, mossieu?"

"I say, Madame Camouflet, do you know anything about the bakeress just round the corner?"

"Madame Fridolin? I should think so. I have dandled her as a baby in my arms—that darling creetur!—well-conducted, steady, not a bit stingy with her *étrennes*, always civil and polite. She!—she's a pearl of a woman."

"Ah, really? A perfect paragon? A female phenomenon?"

"No, mossieu; not so bad as that. I once saw a phenomeny; 'twas a pig with two heads. She isn't a phenomeny."

"Thank you; thank you," he said; adding, as he ran upstairs to his room, "if Madame Camouflet can give her a good word, she must be something out of the common way."

Still out of breath, he sat down and wrote:

"Madame,

"I have guessed the truth, and the delicacy of your action has deeply touched me. Your kind offering has proved a lucky omen. I have since become rich—but not yet happy. Nor can I be so, unless you will consent to share the bettered fortunes of

"Your grateful servant,

"Lucien Berluron."

After this epistolary achievement, he threw himself on his bed and indulged in golden dreams of the future. He was recalled to realities by a voice outside his door singing, "*Asile hereditaire!*" It was Antonin, who, on being shown Cristol's letter, emitted as near an approach to an *Ut de poitrine* as he could command.

"And now," said Berluron, "instead of lending me twenty sous, please render me a still more important service. Take this letter to Madame Fridolin, the bakeress round the corner, deliver it into her own hands, and say that you will wait for an answer."

"I obey you, Nabob. I fly thither, Crœsus." And he darted downstairs, humming, "*Je n'y puis rien comprendre.*"

To beguile the moments of suspense, Berluron opened letter the third. It came from the Porte-Saint-Martin Theatre, whose manager offered him a splendid engagement for three years. "Done!" he exclaimed in melo-dramatic vein. "Accepted!—

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Adieu, Montparnasse, cradle of my artistic infancy! Adieu, Brulot! my noble and respected mentor; adieu! It is now Paris, the capital of the civilised world, that will crown me with glory and load me with execrations!"

His declamation was interrupted by the entrance of the adolescent tenor, warbling "*Plus blan—anche que la bla—an—che herm—i—i—ne.* Happy mortal!" he continued, winking one eye. "After opening your letter, she uttered a pretty little cry in E flat, and then, with trembling voice and a charming smile, declared her will that M. Berluron should come and fetch the answer himself."

Our traitor was soon the happiest *troisième rôle* on earth, for fair Fornarina speedily became Madame Lucien Berluron, and Antonin could sing, quite apropos, "*La Boulangère a des Écus!*"

E. S. DIXON.

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SYMPATHY.

And in the desert he sank down to die;
The desperate duel, hand to hand with death,
Was over; burning sand and burning sky,
Dulled brain, glazed eyes, and panting, struggling breath,
Told how the fight had gone; and grey and grim,
The grisly victor paused to look at him.

On him, and on the scathing token left,
When for a moment from the grasp of Time,
Death seized the world—though of his prey bereft,
His mark was there—the desolate sublime
Of Nature marred, defaced, to ruin given,
The blot of wasted earth, unhelped of Heaven.

He sank to die. There was no living sound
In that vast solitude, but in his ears
Echoed the warning to each pilgrim, bound
To the dim goal of all our hopes and fears;
What did it ring to him departing thus,
No loving voices pleading "Stay with us?"

* * * * *

Sounds of village church-bells, through the orchards ringing;
Sounds of merry footsteps, through the grasses springing;
Sounds of happy laughter and girlish melodies,
And one voice that faltered in its low replies.

* * * * *

The sand storm gathered in the violet gloom,
The far horizon of that shoreless ocean,
And rushed across it, like the van of doom,
Set by the signal wind in fiery motion;
And the Sirocco, with its burning wing,
Swept the pale brow with death dews glistening.

* * * * *

And the dry lips parting seemed to drink the breeze,
Blowing free and joyous from the Northern Seas,
While the sunny ripples made music soft and sweet,
Dancing o'er the pebbles, to kiss her fairy feet.

* * * * *

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The wandering fingers of the aimless hand
Touched the drained water-skin, that blank despair
Had tossed beside him on the cruel sand,
And made a rustle in the dumb dead air;
And the dulled senses waking once again
Fraught with sweet phantasy the parting pain.

* * * * *

Long arcades of fir trees, glancing groves of larch,
Glistering, whispering, gleaming in the winds of March,
Violets peeping shyly at the stolen bliss,
The meeting in the trysting place, the lingering lovers' kiss.

* * * * *

And when the hungry vultures swooped and swayed,
Hovering a moment ere they settled down
On the poor clay there undefended laid,
The hands were crossed in peace, the weary frown
Had left the brow, and on the still cold face
A happy smile shed soft pathetic grace.

The quiet English sunset warmly slept,
On shadowing trees, green sward, and blushing flowers,
Where the calm home its ordered motion kept,
Through the long radiance of untroubled hours;
And in her matronhood, secure, serene,
Fair wife, sweet mother, reigned its tranquil queen.

Through the soft grey gloaming rang the evening bells;
Why should they waken for her the pang of old farewells?
The bright brook as it tinkled, where the lush green willows weep,
Why should it sound like mimicry of ocean's stately sweep?

The girlish ties so long ago were broken,
The girlish joys and sorrows all forgot,
O'er the fair foolish dream last words were spoken,
So far away, she scarcely knows the spot,
Where, with no fond memorial flowers dressed,
Youth's first love lies in unremembered rest.

Through the soft grey gloaming crept a sudden chill;
Through her proud tranquillity thrilled a sense of ill;
Past life's fitful fever of hopes and fears and schemes,
What frets the restless waking? what fills the haunted dreams?

He, dying, dead, alone in desert drear;
She, living, sleeping, in her guarded home;
They two, so far apart—who were so near—
Once more the streams estranged, together come,
To blend for ever in the boundless sea,
Which, on the shore, we call eternity. SUSAN K. PHILLIPS.

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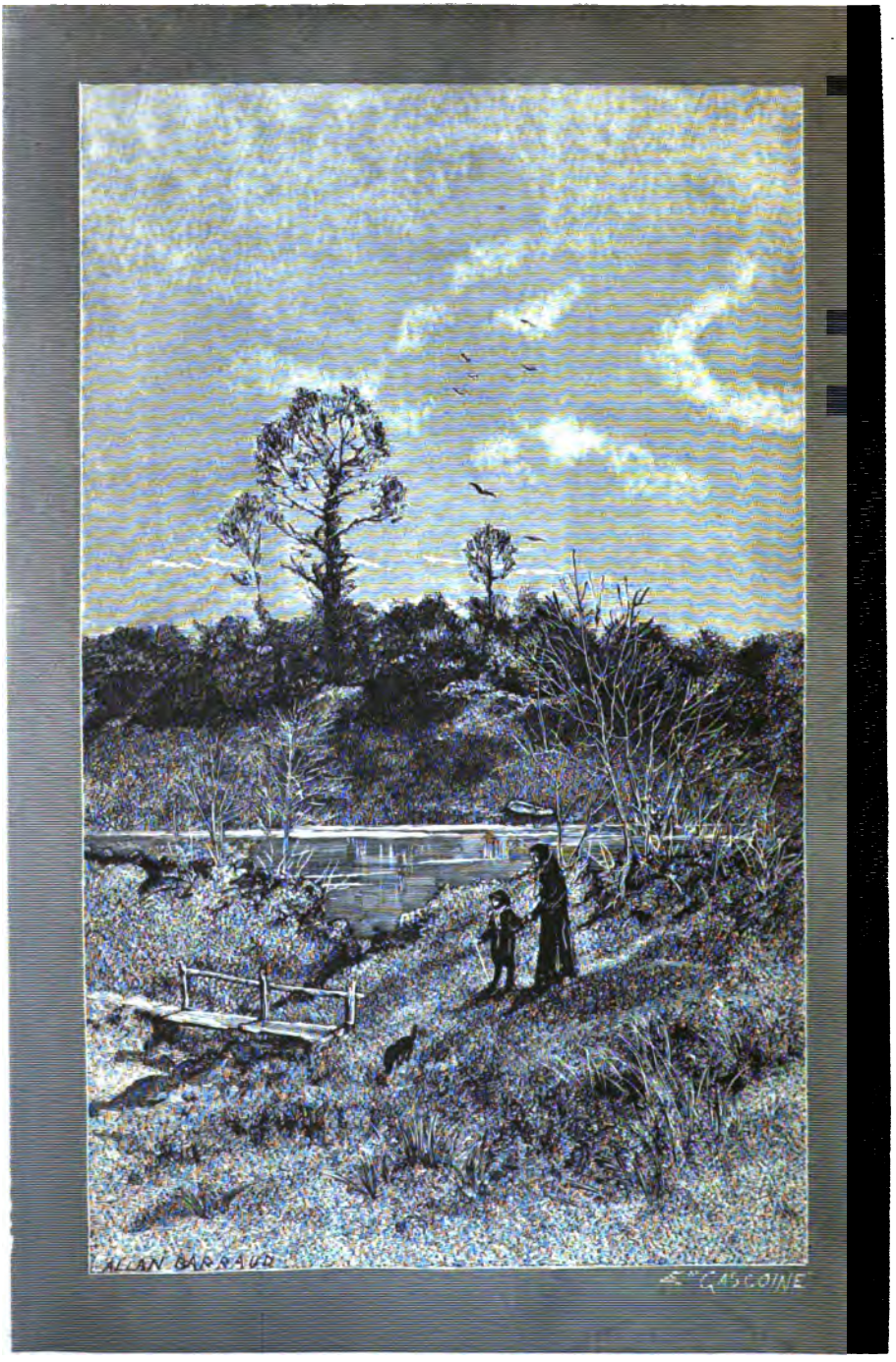

PASSING SUMMER.

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TIME.

AUGUST, 1883.

A REAL QUEEN.

CHAPTER IX.

'But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the Day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

I HAVE not thought it worth while to insult my readers by the formal information that Rosamond Fane had returned to England Queen of Apahu. I only say so now because the passing months have made it more than possible that some among them may have forgotten the very existence of Rosamond Fane. Indeed who had not, save Oswald? For her uncle was dead, and to her sister she belonged to an ancient dreamland: and as to Crossmarsh, dozens of births, marriages, and deaths had been written over the story of how Rosamond Fane had thrown herself over the cliff in a brain fever. Nine days is the period for wonder: and this was nine years.

Or rather it was nearer ten since the child of fifteen had been taken up suddenly from such a home as Crossmarsh (whence she had never been ten miles distant in her life) as it were up into the clouds, and dropped straight therefrom upon an unknown shore in the South Seas. That is perhaps the only adventure on record for which the whole world and all time may be defied to furnish a fellow—the one absolutely new thing that there has ever been under the sun. She had just vanished without a trace from the safest and quietest of English homes: and had woke out of a nightmare—well, in Apahu: an island of which the most learned geographer had never heard. Let that be matched in human experience if it can. And yet the process had not a grain of magic in it from first to last, but, on the contrary, taken step

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by step, contains no more unlikelihood than the things that are always happening to us or around us, every day.

But to her, who till now had known no wonders greater than sunrise and spring, the immediate past had seemed such a chaos of wonders that nothing could well seem wonderful any more. It was to her literally as if she had been lifted up into the sky by a giant hand and dropped again at random. She lay passively upon the deliciously warm sand, upon which the caprice of the waves had tossed her without hurt or pain. Perhaps, thought she, she was dying or dead, and this was the threshold of the world of souls. Perhaps Sophy and uncle Æneas were standing round her bed, watching the parting of spirit from clay—which is as likely to be pleasant as not, if we only knew. Of course she felt weak, and her brain seemed to have done with thinking: but her languor felt like the presage of infinite rest, and her senses were bathed in an atmosphere of heavenly fragrant balm. And surely those two perfect children, unspoiled by a rag of mortal clothes, who stood gazing at her, hand in hand, with the eyes of fawns, must be the angels of the threshold—if only it were credible that the Cherubim have coffee-coloured skins.

Happily for this shuttlecock of destiny, it was not among the traditions of Apahu to treat a stranger in any of the methods accepted among the countries which Dr. Rackstraw counted civilised—the savages neither heaved bricks at her, nor mobbed her, nor invited her to dinner to see how she would feed. But they had their superstitions, for they were human: and the sight of a supremely beautiful girl cast up as if by a miracle from the holy sea, speaking in unknown tongues, and of the complexion of sunshine, overcame the whole country with awe. She was a gift from the elements: and these islanders, in their ignorance, had no experience of any gifts straight from nature that were not divine. From the very beginning there was no doubt of Rosamond's social position in Apahu. Nature had written "Queen" upon her so that all eyes could read: and when the priests of an unknown God consecrated her to empire, they did but translate the language of nature into their own.

It was an ideal kingdom. There were no wars—no seditions—no parties—no crimes. There was not even poverty. A child of five years old could have ruled the island of Apahu. The people were as gentle as their climate, and not a philosopher among them dreamed of doubting that their complex and ancient system of ethics was as much a law of nature as life and death were. They were saturated with ceremonials and symbolisms, but they observed them as unconsciously as they breathed, or as children, who have no friends beyond their own nursery, take for granted the unwritten laws of their little world. Or rather as children, if civilised children were as childlike as the heathen savages of Apahu. Yet their minds were as quick as lightning to observe,

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and to reason after their manner, and their untainted health made life itself an all-sufficient pleasure, without the help of invention. They had their faults, as even their new Queen could see—they could not imagine that man has any higher mission than to take life as he finds it, to get the utmost good out of it, and to leave it none the worse for his having been born. A brain with centuries of Europe in it could not fall into this view of things, though that brain was but a girl's. In truth, the new Queen's was the only burdened brain and sorrowful heart in Apahu. What were the perfect climate, the fragrant air, even the human worship and kindness, to her who was pining and wearying for the grey skies and angry rocks of Crossmarsh, for the perfume of home, and for those whose hearts she had left to break with suspense and sorrow? She could not even get the utmost good out of evil—to speak only in unknown tongues is to be deaf and dumb.

However, she shared one grand quality with her subjects—Health, and therefore Hope: and she could not tell that she was in a sea whither no ship ever came. Sooner or later, release must come: and, with all her bodily needs amply supplied, she took to thinking. And the first fruits of her thoughts were that, even at the worst, she was the worst Christian in the island if she did not give grateful thanks every day of her life for her wonderful preservation. The second, that she was almost the worst if she did not take to heart the lesson that she was no less cared for than the sparrows of the air and the lilies of the field. The third, that thanks are to be rendered in deeds, not thoughts or words. She had to choose between two things and only two—rebellious despair, and the acceptance of life on whatever conditions it had been given: and the latter—so it seemed to a young woman whose brains were English—meant the further acceptance of some sort of duty. All her system of theology, such as it was, would be overturned if all that had happened to her was without a reason as well as a cause: for the logic of doubt had not reached Crossmarsh at that time. And what was the obvious work for a Christian English girl in a heathen land? Clearly to bring these forgotten sheep into her own fold.

The language came to her, at first slowly, then rapidly, as a language always does when one is compelled to use it to escape from being deaf and dumb. But it was unwritten, while the young Queen was no grammarian: and, in addition to these essential and accidental difficulties, she found it barren in words to express even her elementary theology. So long as she talked to the ladies of court out of the Sermon on the Mount, for example, everything was plain sailing, until she was hopelessly thrown out by the absolute incapacity of the Apahuic mind to understand what was meant by doing wrong—not to speak of sin. What was worse, she could not discover that anything was ever done that would have been called wrong in Apahu. The absence

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of words essential to all theology was due to the absence of the corresponding things. Once, indeed, a brilliant thought struck her. She imagined the case of a person who should slay a sea-bird, that being regarded as a consecrated creature, to serve for her first lesson in the difference between good and evil. The coffee-coloured Eve upon whom she tried the experiment hung down her head, said not a single word, and, at the end of the lesson, crept away with her face buried in her hands. The girl was a chatterbox: and yet, when Rosamond next met her, she maintained the same dead silence, and the next time, and the next, as if she had been suddenly struck dumb. Not only so, but none, even of her own kindred, spoke a word to the poor creature, who went about in melancholy plight as if she were impure. Rosamond addressed her: but in vain. She questioned others—equally in vain. Not till the first glimpse of the second new moon that followed did she recover her speech: nor till then was the too zealous missionary allowed to learn that the girl "had heard words not to be spoken: but she has forgotten them now."

"Then what should happen to the one who speaks such words?" asked the Queen of the old priest who had placed the sceptre in her hands, and was supposed to know—everything. "Surely it is the tongue, not the ear, which is to blame?"

"The tongue would not speak if the ear did not listen," said the patriarch of Apahu. "The Queen's words are always wise, and may be spoken—but they must not be heard."

Such logic was unanswerable. She could not adopt Mr. Pitcairn's plan of converting her people with her fists: and yet there seemed no other means. She had to content herself with the practical theology of doing her duty in the state of life to which she had been called: and even this was difficult, seeing that there was so little to be done. Unconsciously to herself, the atmosphere of this island of innocence sank into her own spirit, and dulled even her memories of other times. She also, began to forget that there was another world beyond the sea in which human life was a battle, and in sin and sorrow were something much more than names. Her very soul fell asleep, and even forgot to wonder whether it were dead or alive.

But one day, while wandering with two of her maids of honour along the sands, she saw what seemed to set her whole heart on fire. It was what looked at first like a purple cloud. But her eyes soon made out that it was—land. Now air and light will play such tricks now and then, and reveal across deserts of sea or sand the phantoms of invisible hills and streams. Fata Morgana was doubtless playing one of her tricks now. Never had the Queen of Apahu seen the sign of a distant shore, or heard of such a sight having been given to the oldest or farthest reaching eyes. And yet this could be no fancy—so complete was the mirage that she

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could make out the shape of the cliffs, and even the masses of foliage above them and the white foam at their feet. She reached out both her arms, and, as her ladies' eyes followed hers, there came into view a nest of white huts, with whiter sails slowly passing them. There was nobody in Apahu to scatter her vision by a lecture on the laws of light: and presently she was surrounded by what was called a crowd in that country, all more full of wonder than she. As she stood with outstretched arms towards the revelation of her own world, she looked as if spreading out her wings to fly—and ah, why had nature denied her wings? Nor did the vision pass till the sun went down with tropical swiftness: and then it remained in her dreams. For she dreamed she was at home, and fifteen years old.

There was nothing contrary to the laws of Apahu—since the case was without precedent—in this summons to their Queen to return for a season to the unknown world whence she had come. Where there was no tradition to the contrary, the royal will was law: and, moreover, she had the privileges belonging to a mystery. The matter was laid before the sacred college (I must manage with English terms as best I can) and Rosamond's old priest, her especial counsellor, found himself in a minority of one. It was with sorrow that he brought her the tidings that, since she willed it, she must go. "I am an old man," said he. "I, also, am on the eve of my voyage back to that other world whence we all came. But old as I am, I, nor my father before me, though he lived to six score years, ever saw what you have shown us, even in a dream. It fills me with dread that we, with living eyes, have seen the land that lies beyond the grave. We have seen things not to be seen. What should this forebode to living souls?" It was thus that the Queen learned, for the first time, that Apahu regarded itself as the entire world, bounded by an infinite sea; and that her subjects believed her about to pass that ocean while still alive. And why not, when she had already crossed it full-grown?

"It is not for the old to teach the young," said her priest, sadly and humbly. "You are fresh from where you are going—I came from it as a child, and have long ago forgotten its ways. But I heard from my father, who heard it from his, and he from his fathers, that Apahu is blessed because its name has never been named to the evil spirits who live beyond the sea. Who they are I know not: only I tremble. I have guessed there is evil, for I have learned there is pain. I dread to think what ruler next may be sent us from the sea."

"But I shall learn all that the other world has to teach," said the Queen, "and all that I learn I shall be able to teach again. Do you think I will not return? Do I not love my people—the gentlest, kindest, best, that ever were known? Do I not owe you all more than I can ever repay? God has made me your Queen

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—God forbid that I should give up my crown to one who must needs love you all less than I! Only now I *must* go. In that other world I have a sister—kindred—friends. I shall find those who will teach me what I am hungering and thirsting to teach my people, and know not how. I shall come back—and it will not be long."

She was burning to start for those white huts and white sails which, though now become invisible, could not possibly be unattainable, since they had been seen. But she had passed those years of growth in her island during which a child becomes a woman: and this under influences which had made her one with the people among whom she had been thrown. Crossmarsh, with its blank life of solitary fancies, had left a clear page whereon Apahu might be written large, with nothing to erase or to confuse the letters. For all those years she had not been brought in contact with an English thought, or heard an English word. She had learned to dream even with a new tongue: and the silent power of Goodness had enveloped her till, though unknowingly, she was spoiled for this common life of ours—which indeed, save in her own fancies, she had never known. She hungered for home, but it never entered her head to become an escaped prisoner, and to throw off the duties which belonged to her as a Queen. She had made friends—she had imperceptibly learned to think their thoughts, and to make their ways hers. Of course she would return, and in such wise as to reward her people for their love a thousand-fold. She believed that Rosamond Fane of Crossmarsh, and Queen Ngahoung of Apahu, were still one and the same: and that, while she had been changing from a child into a woman, all her old world had been standing still.

She was longing for the return to her childhood: to see again the same flowers in the old garden, and to amaze Sophy with her reappearance from the grave. Nevertheless it was a sad as well as a solemn moment when, the centre of a great, incomprehensible mystery, herself the mystery of mysteries, she stepped from the shore, in the sight of all her people, into the great canoe which was to bear her across the world-encircling sea. She wore the consecrated jewels, rubies and emeralds, and the circle out of which she stepped was formed of chief priests and judges in their robes of white, yellow, or crimson silk, of jewelled nobles, and of the ladies of the land. There were neither applauding shouts, nor tears. It was the will of the Queen, whose words were the oracle of fate, and awe silenced the voice of sorrow. She was about, without dying, to pass over the waters of life and death, which she alone had already passed without having been born. Twelve men, chosen by lot from the best mariners of the country, were to carry the royal canoe to the invisible shore. Not one, though bound upon so marvellous an adventure, betrayed a sign of doubt or of fear. Indeed no Apahuac was ever troubled with doubt of any kind:

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and they trusted their Queen as their mother, children that they were. Indeed, there was no visible sentiment among them all but pride, that this adventure had been trusted by destiny to their hands: and envy must have been found on the shore if such a serpent had been known in Apahu.

The voyage of the ship *Argo*—the first voyage of Columbus—the voyage of Queen Ngahoung: these three, each in its way, are the wonder-voyages of the world. Faith was the grand element in the third. When the next sun rose, and the horizon was still as clear of land as it was of clouds, the Queen's heart sank a little: but her sailors' hearts were as stout as at starting. One does not travel from this world to the other in a day. They had seen the vision of the shore, and therefore knew which way to sail, and the wind seemed to know it too, for it set steadily to the same path, though not so strongly as to quarrel with the sea. Their unflinching faith gave their Queen hope: and on the morning of the fifth day they saw land—no mirage: and in the evening ran ashore. The Queen landed: her sailors kissed her hands and her feet, and sailed back for Apahu, to tell how they had touched the shore of the world of Souls, and had returned alive.

But the country did not go into mourning for its Queen. She had said she would return: and words, even when promises, were sacred in Apahu. Only the Queen's old priest fell into a lethargy, wherein he spoke no words but three—"It is the End."

Chapter X.

I thought me free as thoughts are free,
Or dreams of love that's past and o'er,
Nor feared I e'er again should see
That shadow on the floor.

Yet who may hide his days so deep
For foes to find? When dread was slain,
And memory's self had fall'n asleep,
The shadow came again.

Oswald Hargrave's business at Laxham proved to be more complicated even than he had feared. His letter to Sophy but poorly represented the state into which a mad trustee, of reputed and unquestioned sanity, had contrived to bring them. With the aid of the lawyer, however, he contrived to clear up the business so far as to learn that uncle Æneas had, with the aid of Sophy's signature whenever it was required, been investing her whole capital, and even whatever could be raised on mortgage or otherwise, in a mass of worthless and unsaleable rubbish—all for her benefit, of course, but not the less to her ruin. With a cunning that must have grown with the growth of his craze, he had from time to time employed at least a dozen lawyers, so as to avoid the disagreeable necessity of having to hear good advice: while his

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own estate, which his mismanagement had rendered liable to his ward's, was simply *nil*.

There was certainly no reason why Oswald should consider himself answerable to one of two sisters simply because nine or ten years ago he had wished to marry the other. But his conscience had always been a jealous tyrant: and it told him that if he had not been spending all those years upon the pursuit of what he alone would not call a phantom, he would have seen what was going on, and Rosamond's sister would have been an heiress still. "After all, dare *I* call Æneas Fane a madman?" he thought, "It is what men would call me—if they knew. If I could only be sure she is dead!—but then I know that Lawrence Derwent lives: it is too late for thinking, now. After ten years, one *must* go on to the end. If I am mad—well, mad I must be."

But it did not strike him as a sign of madness that he should impoverish himself for Rosamond's sister's sake, though she had no more claim upon him than what he chose to imagine. And indeed there was a time—at least so we teach ourselves to believe—when nobody would have called him mad: when a knight who devoted his life to find or avenge a lady, and to punish a villain, would have had poems made in his honour. And after all, when I come to think of it, I cannot bring myself to decide that Oswald Hargrave's purpose was much less foolish, or even much more barren, than the ordinary purposes of life which are accepted as sane. No doubt he might have made a fortune, or written a book, or whatever else it might be, with half the labour: but then to his mind Rosamond was better worth seeking than a fortune which she could not share, and as for books—well, living a book is as good as writing one, any day: and moreover he had no vanity, except what consisted in finishing whatever he had happened to begin. As it was, there was only one book wanting to the world—the only book that he needed: the book that should have told him of Apahu.

Having, so far as was possible at present, arranged preliminaries with the lawyers at Laxham, subject to Sophy's approval which no doubt would be given, he was able, on his way back to town, to return to the subject of Silver Moldwarp, in connection with Lawrence Derwent, and to the means by which he might render available that shadow of a clue. That still baffled him, and for the same reasons which had before raised up a fatal objection to every course he had been able to think of. He went out of his way to pass the book-shop on his way to his hotel—it was still there, but as unsuggestive as ever. If only he had a friend to whom he could give his whole confidence, and who had both the time and the craft to act for him as a detective, much might be done: but if Moldwarp was in the interest of the escaped convict, Oswald's personal enquiries would only serve to put the rascal on his guard. And he had no desire for the help of law or

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police in hunting down Lawrence Derwent, though it would have been at service, seeing that the man was a felon who had broken gaol. But, if Rosamond were to be found, alive or dead, Oswald must get the felon under his own personal power—the law might have him when he had been used and thrown away. So far as the purpose of his life was concerned, the time spent over Sophy's business had been clean thrown away.

He was just about starting for Richmond Place, when he received a letter from the lawyer at Laxham, enclosing another letter which had been addressed to him there and had arrived immediately after his departure. The address was in Sophy's hand-writing. "An answer to mine, I suppose—but there was no occasion for that," thought he. But when he had read it—"What in the name of all perverse folly is the meaning of this? Rackstraw—Miss Gray—companion and secretary to an outlandish Queen? What is Rackstraw, that he should meddle with her affairs, and mine? This will never do."

So, instead of walking at his leisure to Richmond Place, in order to think out the great complication, he drove straight to Mayfair, and arrived just as another visitor had knocked and was waiting at the door. He recognised the man from Nevada: and he was also recognised, for his fellow visitor gave him a careless nod of half acquaintance, accompanied by a smile which seemed meant to convey some special meaning. "So you have found your way here, too?" asked he. "Oh, I remember—you are a traveller—Is the Senhora at home? Does she receive?" he asked, as the door was opened.

"Is Miss Fane here?" asked Oswald.

"The Senhora is at home, Mr. Harding," said the groom of the chambers respectfully, to the first enquiry. "Miss Fane? No Miss Fane lives here."

"I beg your pardon—I mean Miss Gray," said Oswald, as the man from Nevada entered before him.

"Oh yes—Miss Gray! She is with madam."

And so Oswald, dimly groping for such clue as Silver Moldwarp's fingers might just possibly hold, all unconsciously entered the very centre of the maze.

"What you have seen of the world!" Rosamond was saying to her secretary. "It is wonderful—and you so young. Why, you must know everything. You ought to be the queen of my poor people, instead of me. And—do you know England as well as you know all those places abroad?"

"I know very little of England, madam," said Sophy. "Very little indeed."

"Did I not tell you never to call me 'madam' again? Well, we shall both know more of England very soon. I am going on a journey—and indeed I shall be glad, for London is a horror; not

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at all what I expected. I can hardly breathe. But still of course it is London that I must look for what I want—all the goodness, and the wisdom, and the science that I must carry back with me, when I go. Do you like London?"

"No," said Sophy with a sigh. "It is the only place where I have ever known sorrow—and—but that is ungrateful. I am glad to be in your service. You don't seem like a mistress: you seem like a friend."

"Seem? No. I *am*. The minute I knew your name, I knew we should be friends. Oh, I wish you could see *my* country—I had forgotten, I didn't know, I mean, that England was so dark and so close, and the people so gloomy and grave. And then the poor who suffer, and the rich who do not help the poor—my dear child, I sometimes wonder if after all my people could get much good from yours. There is religion, of course—but—I wonder if it is wrong to think that people who live up to their own, and never do wrong, are best left alone. Oh, it is a dreadful responsibility to be a Queen. I wish you *could* see my country—with its earth-like paradise and its skies like heaven, and its people, all as beautiful as angels, and as wise as little children are! You mustn't judge of them by me. I am full of doubts, and wants, and sorrows: I have thoughts for which they have no words. Do you think it would be best for them if I were never to go back to them again?"

It was the lioness asking advice of the mouse. "I think, madam," said Sophy timidly, "I think your people have a great and a good queen. But oh, if they are heathens!" she exclaimed, forgetting that the Senhora must needs be a heathen too—"Of course they must be taught all *that*—you must find some clergyman who will tell you what to do—"

"I have seen dozens," said Rosamond sadly. "After I was seen at the Derwents, they used to come and advise me every day. They all talked very well, but none of them seemed to understand. And then they all wanted me to have my people converted to different things: and out of every dozen the twelfth said that the eleven others were all wrong—"

"But religion is religion," said Sophy. "Any sort if it was Christian, would be better than none."

"Dear child—do you know that my people have lived in faith, hope, and charity for hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years? Will they and their fathers and their children be condemned for knowing no better than to be content with these—just because, being blind to the darkness, they have been blind to the light too? I dread to bring among them the doubt, the terror of death, the want of charity, that I find here—everywhere. Let it be *my* fault that they are left blind. *My* sin will not be visited on *them*. If I refuse to let them know the truth, it will be my sin—not theirs"

This was a flight far and far beyond Sophy, who had never until this moment been taken into confidence by a heroine, who had

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learned from her queendom to place the good of her people before even her own soul. It was a new experience for the girl to hear right and wrong, sin and duty, and the relations of sovereign, church, and people, treated, not as matters for books and sermons, but as real, practical things—as real, and of more intense moment, than going to market even.

"But enough of that," said Rosamond, with a sudden smile—though rather sad for all its sweetness, as if it were a confession that she had rather wasted her confidence upon her new friend. "I retract my wish that you were a queen. Tell me about yourself, rather. You are an orphan—like me?"

"Yes—my father and mother both died, when I was quite a child."

"So did mine—but I can just remember my mother, though not her dying. Have you brothers? Sisters?"

"I have no brother. I had a sister once—but she died."

"You are indeed alone! But how came you to know Dr. Rackstraw?"

"He has been a very kind friend—and in bringing me to you, more kind than I can say. Do you know, I can hardly believe that you come from an unknown country, so far away? And you are nearly as fair as I."

"And you don't think me very much like a heathen savage?"

"Oh, madam! You know I think you the loveliest woman in the world!"

"I am glad of that, my child! I want to give a good impression of my people: for I love them and am proud of them—I never knew how much till I came away. Do you know, I am half glad you are so alone? For perhaps you will go back with me—when I go. I want also to give a good impression of your people to mine. All the others here are so ugly, and are not gentle, as mine are, at all. Of course Dr. Rackstraw is a man of genius—but I should hardly like to take him as a specimen: he is not exactly beautiful. How would you like to come?"

"Madam," said Sophy, "there is nothing I would like better in the world! I *hate* England. I should like to leave it, and never see it again."

"Now what does that mean?" asked Rosamond, smiling through a mist in her eyes at Sophy's flushed cheeks and eager tone. "You must neither bring hate with you, nor call me madam, if you are to come with me. I *love* England—love her, though her face is all frown while my island's is all sunlight and smile. And I mean to love this dear, old, ugly England yet more. But, though I love it ever so much, my people are my people: they must always come first with me—first of all! I shall have to go back, at least for a while—and so—it is settled—you will come too. Ah, you will not hate England when you have been away for a year. You will hunger for a sight of her very ugliness—

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"But indeed I would not—I want to go to *your* country—where people do not only pretend to be friends, until one is poor . . . . . But one would think *you* were English! It is very—"

"Strange? Not at all. If you were only a little browner and a little taller you would pass for one of my people very well. And you shall be one, since you will. You shall wear this *Qahoung*—Ruby: that means you are one of my people now; and my friend. Now, kiss the hand of your Queen."

Sophy pressed her lips to those forgotten fingers, and the forgotten lips touched her brow.

"Mistare Harding for the Senhora!" announced the Swiss. "And a gentleman to see Miss Gray."

Rosamond's eyes, close to Sophy's face, saw the girl's face colour yet more quickly than before and a startled look in her eyes. In love affairs, Rosamond was a nun. But nuns know how to read, and the language of love was not among the things that were unknown in Apahu. "Are you so sure you hate England?" whispered she. "Are you sure I am not punished for my greediness in being glad you have no friends but me? . . . . . Let me see—I think Mr. Harding comes to talk business: I will see him here. You had better see your friend in the parlour, Miss Gray. He may have business too."

Poor Sophy felt stricken with shame. She knew that her tell-tale colour, so terribly out of season, had betrayed the hope and fear of her heart that her nameless visitor would prove to be her false friend and lover, whom she had vowed never to see again. Who else should seek her out, and find her, despite her change of name? It might be that he would be able to explain—her pride and her suspicion might have wronged him, after all. So she put on an air of ice, and the man from Nevada, who passed her on the stairs with a bow, was experimented upon by a half curtsey charged with frozen dignity. But her heart was beating as it had never beaten before: and, when she entered the parlour, it turned to real, not make-believe frost, at the sight of Oswald Hargrave—the best and truest friend that she had in the world: and that without knowing that it was he to whom the apparent desertion of Horace was wholly due.

"What in heaven's name is the meaning of all this, Sophy?" asked he, for his first word. "I arrange the best of plans for you—I am doing everything that can be done—and I find you in this strange service, under a false name. Here is your letter. What in heaven's name does it mean?"

"I know you are very, very kind. . . . . But only think, Oswald—what *could* I do? I can't take your money. I can't indeed. Of course Crossmarsh must be sold, as that is the only way for the debts to be paid. Just think, Oswald—you have been spending all you have for poor Rosamond's sake: the living must not join the dead in wasting all your means. I am proud—

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I will earn my own bread, since I can: yes, and with comfort and ease. Indeed I have done well—better than well."

"But you must not be proud, Sophy. A fine sort of fellow I should be, while seeking Her, to let her sister serve, or starve. Why have you changed your name?"

"That's because I am proud, too. And it's because—because—well, because I thought it best: and Dr. Rackstraw thought so too. It was he, you know, who introduced me to the Queen—the Senhora, I should say."

"Dr. Rackstraw! What can a stranger know of what you ought to do?"

"Poor uncle's most intimate friend?"

"My dear girl—don't think I meant to be cross with you. But I know the world—at least most of it: and I have learned two things. One is to trust a woman's *first* impression of a man. The second is to distrust the man who flatters another's—craze. You took an instinctive dislike to Dr. Rackstraw at first sight: lesson number one. Dr. Rackstraw flattered your uncle to the top of his bent, pretending to love books of which the result shows he knew nothing. And for this he must have had a motive: lesson number two. I distrust Dr. Rackstraw because you did, and you must, Sophy, because I do."

"Oswald! I never knew you unjust before. Yes—you *are* unjust. Is a man to be condemned for ever because some silly girl thinks him awkward and without manners? Why, where would you all be? What has Dr. Rackstraw to gain from me? *He* understood my pride at once—he has warned me of my friends and enemies—he has been my friend even when he knew I was poor—he has found me a situation in a thousand—"

"As companion to a savage: to an adventuress, for aught you know, though probably he knows—"

"As friend to the loveliest and noblest women I ever knew—yes, if you put it that way. Oh, Oswald, don't be ungenerous—unjust: that is not like you. If you could only see her: if you could only hear her speak—how she loves her people, and would even sacrifice her immortal soul for their happiness: how gentle she is, and how kind, and how wise—"

"My dear, dear Sophy—she may seem all that, and yet she may be no fit companion for you. She comes, I understand, from the South Seas. Now a South Sea Islander, fresh from her own home, does not talk English like a native, dress like a duchess, and look a Venus from some Italian picture. If I must put it plainly—I am your brother, Sophy—I believe her to be some half-bred Portuguese, clever, beautiful, accomplished as so many of them are, whom Dr. Rackstraw has brought to England for ends of his own. An unknown island? Absurd! But a woman like that would be a grand bait for a company to explore non-existent ruby mines—and—you are too innocent to tell tales."

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He knew that he was talking sound sense: but Sophy was fresh from the influence which some women have—that of fascinating their own sex no less, or rather more, than Oswald's. "You are saying horrible things, Oswald!" cried she. "She is my Queen: I will not have her slandered, even by you. You shall see her: you shall judge if she is not even lovelier and nobler than I can say. I *know*. Oh, Oswald—believe that I am doing what is right—I must not be a burden on you: I can be of use to her."

"And—when she returns to her Atlantis, her Utopia, or wherever her ruby mines may be?"

"I am alone, Oswald. I have said I will go too."

Oswald paced the room silently. Then, "It is like witchcraft!" said he. "Why did Rackstraw force himself into your uncle's confidence? Why did he encourage him in his waste? Why did he seize the first chance of bringing you into this woman's service, under a false name? I must get to the bottom of this—and I will: though my hands are overfull already, and my wits overburdened, Heaven knows. I am not hard, Sophy, nor ungenerous I hope, nor unjust I know. You are Her sister—and mine. A girl like you is the best of instruments in unscrupulous hands, when they are playing a deep game. What end have I but your good? Who is this Rackstraw?"

"Talk of the devil indeed!" said the Doctor himself, who at that moment opened the door. "Mr. Hargrave? An unexpected pleasure. Perhaps I can answer that question better than Miss Gray. I have been in countries—ha ha!—where such a question, in such a tone, would have had to be settled at some dozen paces distance: but I am a missionary of civilisation, and duels, being a survival of barbarism, are out of my line. Besides, your question was perfectly natural, since you wanted to know. I am Hermon Rackstraw, Doctor of Philosophy, Agent General for the Goblin Islands. You can see my credentials at my office, if you have any business in that rising group, where land is still to be had cheap with a moral certainty of being able to sell it at fifty times the value in a very few years."

"Thanks," said Oswald, shortly. "I will call at your office—if you will let me know where it is, and name a time."

"Here is my card, Mr. Hargrave. You will find me any day this week, between two and four."

"Then—Sophy—good-bye for to-day. To-morrow, or next day, I will see you again. By that time you will have heard from Laxham, about the sale. *And in that matter you will be guided by them and me.*"

And so he left her, as if in anger—for which indeed he was surely not without cause. Dr. Rackstraw stroked his smooth chin in silence, while Sophy, her eyes swimming, listened to Oswald's footsteps as they passed into distance with what she took for an angry ring.

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"Oh!" said she, when she heard them no more. "What *shall* I do to make my brother believe in my Queen? If he had only seen her—and now he is gone."

"I am afraid—very much afraid," said Dr. Rackstraw, "that Mr. Hargrave does not approve of what you have done. Never mind, dear Miss Fane. *We* know that you have done wisely and well. After all, that is the grand difficulty of doing right—that we can't make other people understand. It has been so with me, hundreds of times. You don't repent having done as you have done?"

"Not for a moment. And yet—but you can't know what anything like a quarrel with Oswald means."

"Indeed, but I can. Do you think *I* can't understand everything that concerns *you?* Of course you could not take his—charity. He will see that for himself, in time. And you have your place in the world. I heard quite enough, as I came in, and afterwards, to see how the land lies, there. He mistrusts me—God knows why. But you do not?"

"No, indeed! But that was not what distressed me so much—but he has got such dreadful ideas about the Senhora—"

"Ah—he thinks her an impostor, eh?"

"What—you heard?"

"Not a word. But I know what notions always come into those dull, narrow minds. They never believe what they cannot understand. They have no *Faith*, dear Miss Fane, like you—and me. I hope I have brought you into a wider and nobler life—a life worth the living. You must trouble your head about all these trifles no more. We must leave them to the Hargraves and the Derwents—the moles and the butterflies. *We* must soar."

"Ah—you and the Senhora," sighed Sophy. "But I have no wings."

"Then I have no eyes. By the way, I think I've cleared up the mystery about our other friend—young Derwent, you know. He had a good reason for not coming after all."

"Indeed? Then—!"

"Yes—the best of all reasons. Mrs. Derwent—his mother—"

"Is she ill?"

"No—tells me that he is just engaged to a Miss Craven: that's all. So of course, under the circumstances, one couldn't very well expect a young man to go about making morning calls. He lives in a rapture, you know—however, I'm glad to think it was only that, and not what we supposed. No: one should never judge harshly—never. There's always some good, honest reason for everything, if we only knew."

"Oh—is that all?"

"That's all. It will be a good match, and will please his mother: and I'm glad of it, for he's not a bad sort of a young man."

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"So am *I* glad—very glad indeed! Do you know how soon the Senhora means to go home?"

"Oh, not yet awhile. You needn't be afraid—"

"I'm sorry you don't know, because I hoped it would be soon. I am going with her—"

"And you are impatient to see that wonderful island of hers? Just so—there, you see, grow your wings! But there's no hurry—why do you want to fly away?"

"Because I do!" said Sophy, keeping down a rising sob, to her pain. "And that *is* all."

Her lover had the sense to see nothing, and to let her go with no more than some common-place word. Indeed for that matter he had not really seen everything: for though he had hurt her heart with intent, he had no means of knowing the depth and breadth of the wound. Of course she believed him. It was not as if Horace were her betrothed, of whom it would be against her duty to believe what might by the remotest possibility be a lie. Dr. Rackstraw was the family confidant, she knew, and what he said could not possibly be wrong: besides, he himself had been treated unjustly by Oswald, and her sympathy, and her sense of justice, as well as her gratitude, were all on his side. Why should not Horace have been all the time engaged to another girl? Some men cannot help flirting—idiot that she had been, to fancy that it was more than his way, and that his visits had meant anything more than an easy way of killing time! And a "good" match—that meant that his *fiancée* was rich while Sophy was poor: and not even the exaltation of a lover could excuse a gentleman for taking no notice of the death of a friend, and for shaking off, as if she were the dust that had gathered on his feet, the only creature whom that friend had left, ruined and alone. She did not even seek the solitude of her own room to let her last sob free, and to recover her lost pride once for all. Not even so much debt was due to a dead dream: nor would she give Horace the paltry triumph over her of causing a single tear. She went straight to her mistress, forgetting that the Queen was not alone.

This was not by any means the first visit of the man from Nevada to Senhora Miranda. Rosamond rather liked him: and the better the more she saw of him. He was agreeable, apparently unaffected, and, so far from wanting her portrait, or her subscription, or her materials for books and articles, he amused her by discussing her persecutors in a tone of semi-cynical humour. On what pretence he had given himself a place in her life she could not have told: he had stepped into it easily, and as a matter of course, and altogether in such a manner that it never occurred to her to ask the question. Nor did it occur to her to notice that he generally timed his visits, now increasingly frequent, to such hours as gave him the least chance of coming into collision with Dr. Rackstraw. Not that the latter, even without the aid of a secretary of his

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own choosing, was likely to be in the dark as to any of the Senhora's doings, or who came to see her, and how often, and when.

But *à propos* of the secretary—"So you have set up a companion," he was saying, while Sophy was engaged with Oswald. "And a very pretty girl she is—though she swept past me as if *she* were the Queen. Some friend of Rackstraw's, I suppose?"

"No—of mine."

"Of course it's all right you should have a maid of honour. And I'm glad she's your own friend. Have you seen anything of the —what's their name—Derwents lately? Wonderful people they are to be sure. But England is altogether a wonderful place for people like you and me. If I'm not very wrong, you won't be particularly sorry to go home, I sha'n't, I know."

"As to that—yes, and no. But have you nothing to say—nothing to tell?" asked Rosamond—patient in manner, but impatient in tone.

"Well, yes. A good deal. The difficulty is to know where to begin. Perhaps the best way will be to begin at the beginning," said he, drawing his chair imperceptibly nearer, and laying his right hand upon the table so that it might be within magnetic distance of hers. "You will listen? Well—then I will go back to the very beginning of all, so far as I need. Lightly as I seem to take life, I am here in England to take vengeance for a great wrong, and to extort justice under the very eyes of the law I know that I am talking what would be called treason in Apahu—but never mind. England is not Apahu. I was driven out of England by a cabal of scoundrels. I know them all: and I trust to have them in my power. I come back rich—richer a hundred times than if I had had my rights at home. But my riches are nothing to me until they have bought vengeance and justice: you have been long enough in England to understand what I mean."

"Indeed I have!" said Rosamond. "But what has all this to do with—"

"Everything." His voice, commonly so dry and languid, fell into a deep monotone, yet so soft that his words could hardly have been followed farther off than Rosamond's ears. "For some fifteen years I have lived for this that I have told you: and a purpose grows into a man's life, and becomes himself, for half that time. Until what seems like yesterday, I have been ready for murder, if that should be the only means to my only end. You see what sort of man I am: and I wish you to see. I want you to imagine how great the strength must be that is greater than my life, and that makes me—even me—as if all I have told you of had never been: that makes me ready to forget it all. What kind of strength is that? Can you tell?"

Rosamond had drawn back herself and her hand.

"Repentance?" said she.

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"Repentance—for having set myself to undo a vile wrong? And you say that—you, a woman? You know as well as I."

"Then I do not choose to know," said the Queen, rising.

"Which means that you do know, whether you choose or not," said the man from Nevada, rising too. "You know it means that I love you—and that I could not love you more if I had known you for years. One does not learn how to make love, in the mines. But one does learn that a Man is a mate for a Queen, and a Woman for a King. I offer you a Man, heart, and body, and soul. Oh, how can one speak passion? Look at me—see if I do not love you: let crowns be only the ghosts that they are. Let *us* be real—you and I."

He held out both his hands towards her: and the action, and the tones of his voice, turned his rough words into living and passionate things. Rosamond did indeed, without bidding, forget that she was a Queen. But her womanhood did not wake to meet him: it only trembled with dismay. Passion like his she had never seen.

"It is terrible!" she breathed. "I do not love you—and you love me! What have I done?"

"Never mind what you have done. You do not love me? But you can—you will. Love like mine makes love—or hate: nothing between. Do you wish me to turn back into my old path, and live for revenge? But what is the good of words? I have hidden myself from you all this while—now I am what I am. And I more than love you—I want to save you, too. For God's sake throw away that sham crown, that can only end in miserable pain. Remember, I love you without so much as knowing your rust—your nation—your name. I love you like a madman. I see a beautiful woman in league with a villain for some devilish ends. And I only love her, for herself: and for her sake I will let the villain go, and spare his dupes and his tools besides. Do you understand what a man's love can mean—*now?*"

"No—no: I do not understand. What ruin? What villain? What crown? Why do you say all this now? Have you ceased to be my friend?"

"I say all this now, because it will be too late before long. Before long—unless you bid me spare him—your accomplice will be a ruined man. And, for yourself, the world is already asking dangerous questions about Apahu, and its jewels, and its Queen. Let me save you from evil—love will come. My country is real—there you will be a Real Queen."

"Am *I* going mad?" she cried—

"Yes—if you refuse to be saved," he answered. "And there is only one way—and that is mine. I can give you everything—wealth, luxury, passionate love: everything the heart of woman can desire. Think of what your life is now—think what it would be with me!"

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"Are you buying me?" asked Rosamond—for his last words had made her Queen again. "Wealth, luxury? I have them, and to spare. And passionate love? No—not as a price to be paid. For the rest, I am only amazed. Your words mean nothing. What have I to fear? Oh, I am sorry for this, with all my heart and soul—and hate, and vengeance: I did not cross the sea for these. I am sorry—for I meant to have told you who I am: why I am here: for what and whom I am searching in vain, till my heart breaks and will not let me rest: for you could have helped me then, you and no other—I thought—but I cannot tell you now; I have nothing to do with love—of that kind. And now—"

"Help you? Is it not all I ask for—"

"But in your way—not mine. Do you not see I am sorry? Good-bye."

"No—by God!" cried he. "There cannot be good-bye between you and me. Love and vengeance—there is nothing between left for me to choose. But I will warn you: though I so risk all. . . . . Have you ever heard your friend speak of Lawrence Derwent?"

"Never. *Lawrence* Derwent? I have never heard the name!"

"Then—Heaven help you—you have chosen between him and me. But you *shall* have time. No—not good-bye, even now. I have risked all: I will even risk more."

"Good-bye," said she. But, even as she spoke, all bewildered as she was by the burst of passion without preface from one who had seemed the calmest of men, and by threats and warnings that she could not comprehend, there came back the memory of that fatal evening when she had first heard that passionate monotone, pleading for pity and liberty. The man had changed, purposely, past knowing—but the voice had been taken off its guard: that voice which she could never forget till her dying day. How much *she* must have changed! But had he spoken truth when he said, "There can be no good-bye between you and me?"

His presence turned her cold, in the old magical way. Was he to be her doom—and to what end? As a child she had half believed him a wizard—what was she to believe him now? She trembled to think how nearly she had been upon the verge of telling him all, that he might find for her those whom she could not find . . . . .

"Ah—but there are some good things, even in England!" she exclaimed, as Sophy, with set lips and dim eyes, crept into the room. "Kiss me, dear—I am glad there is something for even a savage heathen to understand! To-morrow—to-morrow—perhaps I shall know what to do."

"To go home?" whispered Sophy.

"Child—why, you are crying!" cried the Queen, bursting into tears.

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Chapter XI.

Julian.—What saith the saw?

"Whate'er you'd learn, affect to know it all."

Caspar.—Aye, master: but at that game two can play. For how goeth the by-word?

"If I chase thee, and thou chase me,
The third man saith, Two fools there be."

The office of the Agent General for the Goblin Islands was not built or furnished in such a manner as to put Canada or Australia to shame. Indeed the business of that enterprising colony, at present without colonists, was transacted on the highest floor but one of a high staircase in Mildew Court, which hides in so obscure a corner of the City as to be almost as undiscoverable as Apahu. The offices consisted of an inner and outer room, both inconveniently small: the latter being occupied by an exceedingly smart lad of sixteen or seventeen, and the former by the Agent General, whenever he was there. The boy must have had a good berth of it, for he was very much his own master during office hours, except for a disagreeable irregularity on the part of his employer which made it unsafe to count upon an uninterrupted hour. But on the other hand he might for hours and days together be as idle as he pleased: from which it may be inferred that the Agency was not the sole occupation of Dr. Rackstraw. And this was the truth: for he had a really distinguished name as a promoter of philanthropic enterprise in the interest of commerce, or rather of commerce in the interest of philanthropy and civilisation. He had a really marvellous instinct for discovering odd nooks and corners of the globe where a stroke of business could be done in beads, or damaged prints, or old rifles—the stroke might merely be a flash, but it would now and then take a firm hold, and then the Doctor undertook the supply of true civilisation at large. Socially, his pursuit had a magnificent ring, and as nobody knew much of the Goblin Islands, nobody dared to confess to ignorance on a subject which regarded the extent and integrity of this great empire. There are greater colonies about which quite as little is generally known—this island has so much to remember that she may be forgiven for not being very ready to worry herself over her great-great-grandchildren, who are always astonishing her by having grown so tall.

It happened, however, that, on the day following Oswald's visit to Sophy, the Agent General was at his proper office: nor only so, but he had business there. His visitor was a respectable elderly man, dressed in black, and wearing gilt spectacles, who was addressing him earnestly.

"No, Mister," he was saying, "You do *not* play fair. And them that don't play fair have no call to complain if others act according. That's my moral, and that's the way of the world."

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"Nonsense, Moldwarp," said Dr. Rackstraw. "Just have done with your 'instinc'' for once, and listen to reason. You did me a service. I don't deny it was a big one. I paid you for it—and you can't deny I paid you a big price for a big thing—"

"Precious big—when in six months I had to be back at the flint trade again for bread and cheese!"

"I could find you the capital, Moldwarp, but I couldn't find you the qualities of industry, prudence, thrift, and sobriety. If you squandered what you had, what was that to me? And you forget. When you made the flint trade, as you call the forgery of antiquities, too hot to hold you, who was it that set you up in the old book trade, where your qualities so eminently fitted you to succeed? You are ungrateful, Moldwarp. That's what you are."

"Gratitude's all very well in its place, but it's not business. I can manufacture anything that's wanted—no man better, from an old M.S. to a tenpenny nail. But my best customer's in his coffin, and his effects are being overhauled: and I must make a new start, if it's only as a professor of leger-de-main. There's apparitions to be paid for, and bills."

"Well?"

"Well! That's a queer word for you to say!"

"Indeed? Why?"

"Because I don't see any call for make-believing 'twixt you and I. My instinc''s to go straight, wherever it may be. You just take a word in season, Mister. I gave it you once, and now I'll give it you again."

"Gammon, Moldwarp. You mean that cock-and-bull story about young Derwent being still somewhere in the world? What then?"

"What then! Why, it gives me the choice of a market—that's all. In the world! He's in England. He's in London. And if I like, I can lay my hand on him in an hour. What you say to that, Mister—Eh?"

"Silver Moldwarp. You are the cleverest rascal I ever knew. Uneducated, you can puzzle a savant: and you can find whatever you please to hide. But I'm not a savant, Silver Moldwarp. I'm a practical man. If you take Lawrence Derwent into my confidence, he will simply find himself back again in Lowmoor, and you will follow him. Do you suppose I couldn't prove up to the hilt that you have been perpetrating a system of the grossest frauds on my poor friend, Æneas Fane? And, if that were not enough—But never mind that. You will have to find a jury that will believe a professional forger on his oath against my word . . . . . Simply, I can't be troubled with you any more. Why should I? Lawrence Derwent is a convicted felon, you are a notorious rascal, and there's not a particle of evidence that Colonel Derwent ever dreamed of a second will."

"Then you chuck me over like a rotten egg, Mr. Rackstraw?"

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"Bless the man! Does he think I employed a rascal to do dirty work without reserving the power of chucking him over whenever I pleased?"

"I thought you said *I* was the cleverest rascal going—Eh?"

"Of course I did: for you are—"

"Aye—and it's true, too: though there's ignorant folks might be disposed to bar one. Ah, ingratitude—it's a wicked, shabby thing. Well: give me natural instinc', after all. Instinc'!—"

"Take my advice, Moldwarp. Don't drink. Don't gamble. Don't try to spend two pennies out of one. And then you'll find rascality pay—and not till then. What's the good of being a rascal, if you can't do better than an honest man? And even at the best, honesty pays best in the long run. Take pattern by me—once poorer than you: I the dunce and you the genius."

"And you've beat genius by honesty? And you call it honest to suppress a dead man's last will?"

"No, I do not, Silver Moldwarp. I never did such a thing, since I was born."

"And who did then? I should like to know."

"The world says it was Lawrence Derwent. I say it was—*you*. There—let it be which you please."

"Then all I can say is," cried the unfortunate bookseller, "give me Instinc' before Honesty—that's all!"

"Come in!" cried Dr. Rackstraw, taking no notice of this outburst, in answer to a tap at the inner door.

"Mr. Hargrave, sir," said the smart boy.

"There—be off with you, Moldwarp," said Dr. Rackstraw, brusquely. "I'm always glad to see you: but business before pleasure, don't you know. Well, Mr. Hargrave—so you think of becoming a Goblin? If so, you are wise. But—why, do you know one another, you two?"

"And do *you* know one another?" asked Oswald, face to face with Moldwarp, just within the doorway. "The world is small indeed." He was gaining time for thought how to act and what to say, for he could not help feeling that this accidental meeting might prove one of those chances which, once lost, never occur again. He was aware of Rackstraw's close connection with the Derwents: he had the best of reasons for knowing Moldwarp to be a rogue: and it required no detective skill to put together the fragment of talk in the book-shop with the visit of the known rogue on a small scale to the suspected swindler on a large one. Suddenly there flashed into his mind a sentence which so struck to the centre of the matter that he could not tell whether it was an inspiration or a recollection—"Whate'er you'd learn, affect to know it all."

"No," said he. "Though I came on business, too—you were talking, I suppose, about the convict Lawrence Derwent, who escaped from Lowmoor. Am I wrong? It was about him I came."

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As he spoke, he watched his friends. Moldwarp started, and looked hard at him: Dr. Rackstraw started, and glanced sharply at the door, as if to make sure that, though walls have ears, doors have no tongues.

"And what the devil made you think *that*, sir?" exclaimed he. "So you are a friend of Mr. Silver Moldwarp—eh? Then perhaps your friend will kindly tell you what I have said to him—"

"I suppose," said Oswald, quietly, "that you, as a friend of the family, would care to know where Lawrence Derwent is to be found —that's all."

"Oh! Then I don't—and *that's* all. It seems to me, Mr. Hargrave, that you are rather fond of interfering in other people's concerns. No. I don't want to know what has become of a convicted felon. Nobody wants to know. I have had enough of this. If you don't come about land—I am busy. Perhaps you will allow me to wish you good-day."

"The man is a bully because he has something to hide," thought Oswald. "I think I shall know how to deal with him. . . . . Good-day, then," said he. "Here is my card, if you should wish to know anything after all." He made way for Moldwarp to pass before him, and then followed downstairs. His intention was to keep the bookseller in sight, feeling sure that his pursuit would now lead him to the man he sought fairly straight and soon. But, as soon as he reached the street, Moldwarp turned round and faced him.

"I'm not fond of the sight of you, Mr. Hargrave," said he. "But I'll say for you that *you're* not one of them that tells lies. Do you know where this Lawrence Derwent is—aye or no?"

Oswald shrugged his shoulders. "It is no concern of yours,' said he, and passed on, intending to turn and follow as soon as he could do so unobserved.

"No concern of mine, eh?" muttered Moldwarp. "Then I'll just be even with the whole three of ye!" And, waiting till the other was a convenient distance in advance, he sauntered out of Mildew Court and followed Oswald.

(*To be continued.*)

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A NAUTICAL PROBLEM.

BY A SHIPOWNER.

How to diminish the number and magnitude of maritime disasters is not only an unsolved problem, but a problem which seems to grow every year more difficult of solution. When the "Plimsoll Act" came into operation most landsmen were confident that the records of shipping disasters would grow small by degrees and beautifully less, but the latest Merchant Shipping Act has been in active existence for several years, and the disheartening fact is that wrecks and other casualties at sea grow more numerous.

The general impression among those who know nothing or next to nothing about nautical affairs is that the majority of shipwrecks are caused by "unseaworthiness," by overloading, and by undermanning. It would be well if such were the case, for unseaworthiness, overloading, and undermanning can be prevented by a careful system of inspection. But, unfortunately, no system of inspection and no legislation can control the most fruitful source of disasters at sea, namely, stress of weather; and the consideration of the next most fruitful source, collision, seems almost to be neglected—most certainly it does not receive the serious attention which is its due.

It will not do, of course, merely to say that unseaworthiness, overloading and undermanning receive more attention at the hands of the authorities than they deserve; some proofs must be put forward.

Many who take up a newspaper or other periodical commenting on the wreck returns are appalled by the magnitude of the number of wrecks and other casualties, but overlook the fact that, at least during some years, not four per cent. of these casualties have been attended with loss of life, while the per-centage of vessels totally lost has been four times as much as the per centage of lives lost. Another fact, usually overlooked too, is that nearly all the ships wrecked on the coast have been driven ashore during a gale. A reference to any number of *The Life Boat Journal* will verify this statement. Now, it is as yet impossible for human ingenuity to invent a method for controlling the force of a gale; and no one has discovered how to build a ship which shall be impervious to wind and weather.

In the year 1880-81 the total number of maritime casualties

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reported was 3,575. It was ascertained that during the same year the number of casualties resulting in serious damage *through defects of the hull or equipments* was 32; and the number resulting in minor damage *through defects of the hull or equipments* was 82. What of the 3,461 other disasters? The 3,461 ships which made up the number of these other disasters were presumably seaworthy. In the face of this fact how is it, I ask, that all the legislation, or nearly all, has been devoted of late years to the unseaworthy crafts, and to the persecution of the owners thereof?

When a gale drives a ship ashore, or otherwise disables her, the gale is strictly impartial and does not stop to consider whether the ship is good or bad, wood or iron. It may be said that an unseaworthy vessel would not be able to resist the fury of the gale so well as a seaworthy—using the terms seaworthy and unseaworthy in the Board of Trade sense—vessel, and that here arises the necessity for devoting most of our attention to the condition of the hulls and equipments of our mercantile fleet. One answer to this is obvious; if out of nearly 4,000 disasters only 114 could be charged to defects of hull or equipments, either the number of unseaworthy ships is infinitely less than marine legislators and their friends affirm, or a rotten ship is the best for bad weather. Of course the latter explanation would be absurd, so one must fall back upon the former. As the vast majority of accidents occur to presumably seaworthy vessels, why do not "poor Jack's" friends devote themselves chiefly to the better regulation of such ships at sea?

With regard to overloading I have not much that is new to say, except that I consider very few shipmasters who are worth their salt would allow their ships to be laden too deeply. Nor would owners, even were they as black as it is the custom to paint them, dare to command, or to hint, that their ships should be at the mercy of the first extra puff of wind or the first heavy sea the ships might have to encounter. If owners cared to run the risk that such a line of conduct would entail, insurance offices and Board of Trade investigations alone would soon render the risk too costly and too dangerous for firms or for individuals who might intend to plead homicidal mania in extenuation of their offence. Overloading is perhaps a consideration of less importance than one would suppose it to be. Frequently we hear of fines being inflicted upon the masters and owners of ships for overloading, but often it is doubtful if the vessels have really had too much cargo on board. A Board of Trade inspector who thinks a ship is unfit to swim—a ship which it may be he has never seen before—may be mistaken; at all events, he cannot be expected to be as good a judge of the buoyancy of the ship as the master, who has very likely sailed her for years, and knows her carrying power to an ounce.

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Undermanning, too, is not carried to the extent that many people imagine. A landsman reads that a sailing ship is navigated nowadays with a much smaller crew than a ship of the same tonnage would have required thirty or forty years ago. Naturally the landsman jumps to the conclusion that ships are undermanned, but he is not, in all probability, aware that a ship can be sailed safely to-day with a smaller crew than she would have required had she been afloat a generation or two ago. One of the reasons of this, and the chief reason, is that improvements in the gear, tackle, etc., render it unnecessary to employ so many hands nowadays. For instance, the introduction of the double topsail yard —a twin-spar which is not considered by the merchant sailor an unmixed blessing—has alone reduced the required strength of a sailing vessel's crew by, roughly speaking, about fifteen per cent.

As I have already stated, I consider collision to be one of the most fruitful sources of loss of life at sea. Every year collisions are becoming more frequent, and the reason of this is chiefly because of the growth of steam power on the waters. It is much less easy to avoid collision with a steamboat going fifteen or sixteen knots than with an old-fashioned sailing ship going seven or eight knots; and even when collisions do occur between slow-sailing wooden ships the damage sustained is infinitely less than the damage that would be sustained should two swift-sailing steamers collide, or should a steamer run into a sailing ship. Another thing to be borne in mind is that when a large passenger steamer goes down nowadays the loss of life is often as great as would have arisen years ago if a dozen sailing ships had gone to the bottom with all hands. This alone will account for losses of life at sea growing greater year after year, as year after year large steamers are becoming more numerous; and consequently the likelihood of accidents occurring to them increases. It is a significant fact that in the year 1879-80, while about 7 per cent. of the lives lost at sea occurred through the *foundering* of ships, nearly 25 per cent. were lost through *collisions*.

There are three kinds of collision at sea: collision between two sailing ships, between a steamer and a sailing ship, and between two steamers. Anyone who remembers the details of accidents which have occurred through collisions for several years past need not be told that in nearly all the serious cases a steamer was concerned, so that for practical purposes the consideration of collisions between sailing ships may be abandoned; and, for reasons already referred to, such collisions can never be as numerous nor as serious as collisions in which a steamer plays a part. When a steamer and a sailing vessel get into collision the result of the subsequent investigation of the accident, in the vast majority of cases, is that the blame is attached to the steamer. This narrows down the matter of collision very considerably; in fact, it allows one to say it is to the better regulation of steamers

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at sea that the friends of the sailor should devote most of their attention. We cannot prevent gales, nor can we neutralize their effects; but surely something can be done, and should be done, at least to lessen the number of collisions caused by steamboats.

If I were asked what means I would adopt to make collisions less frequent, I confess I should find it very difficult to answer the question satisfactorily. However, I would suggest, in the first place, that the opinions should be taken of the various Receivers of Wreck at our ports, men whose experience of all sorts of maritime disasters could not possibly fail to render their views valuable in the highest degree. I would not give twopence for the opinion of the ordinary Board of Trade inspector or surveyor.

I expect any man, or body of men, who really understood the question would recommend that a proper and constant look-out should be kept in all steamers, but especially in "cargo-boats," where very often the look-out is *not* on the look-out; that steamers should not travel at a high rate of speed during thick or foggy weather; that the lead-line should not be ignored in shallow or doubtful waters; water-tight compartments and collision bulkheads should not be a mockery, a delusion, and a snare; and that the masters or officers of steamers should, as far as lay in their power, ascertain, before the order "full speed ahead" is given, that their crews are sober and capable. If heavy fines were *invariably* inflicted for breaches of the foregoing regulations, I am confident something would be done in the direction of lessening the number of collisions, and, as a consequence, of rendering the life of the sailor and passenger more secure.

Probably it will be said that nearly all the regulations I have spoken of, in connection with steamers, are already in existence; but my argument is, that penalties for breaches of such regulations as do exist are not enforced with a sufficiently strong hand, and that the Board of Trade does not seem to consider the absolute necessity of discovering and adopting some better means for reducing the frequent recurrence of *collisions*. Too much attention altogether is devoted to the execrated "unseaworthy ship," a class of vessel which in one year was responsible for a little over *three per cent.* of our maritime disasters.

Quitting the subject of collision, I must also say that, in my opinion, sufficient consideration is not given to two means by which loss of life at sea might be diminished—namely, an extension of the lifeboat system and the erection of more harbours of refuge around our coast. It will, perhaps, surprise many people to learn that there are only two or three lifeboat stations on the whole west coast of Ireland; and anyone who knows what shipwreck really means will be horrified if he glances at a wreck chart of that part of the coast of Great Britain which lies between the Firth of Forth and Beachy Head, a coast-line which is certainly not sufficiently provided with harbours of refuge.

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MARRIAGE IN ABYSSINIA.

In Abyssinia the young people begin to think of marriage at a very early age. When a lad wishes to marry, he only enquires for a girl who possesses or can muster twice his own number of oxen, or their value. His proposals are made to the girl's father, and unless there is some strong motive for rejecting him, he is accepted, and everything arranged without consulting the lady's taste or asking her consent. They are usually betrothed three or four months before marriage, during which time the bridegroom frequently visits his father-in-law elect, and occasionally propitiates him with gifts of honey, butter, a sheep or goat; but he is never allowed to see his intended wife even for a moment, unless by urgent entreaty, or a handsome bribe, he induces some female friend of hers to arrange the matter by procuring him a glance at his cruel fair one.

For this purpose he conceals himself behind a door or other convenient hiding place, while the lady, on some pretext or other, is led past it. Should she, however, suspect a trick and discover him, she would make a great uproar, cover her face, and screaming, run away and hide herself, as though her sense of propriety were greatly offended by the intrusion; although previously to his making the offer, she would have thought it no harm to romp with him or any other male acquaintance in the most free and easy manner. For after she has been betrothed, she is at home to everyone except to him who most sighs for the light of her countenance. In Tigre, especially in Ghirie, a superstitious belief is entertained that if a girl leave her father's house during the interval between her betrothal and marriage, she will be bitten by a snake.

When the wedding day approaches, the girl is well washed, her hair combed and tressed, and she is rendered in every way as agreeable as possible. A day or two before that appointed for the marriage, a "dass," or bower, is erected. It is made of a framework of stakes; the uprights are driven into the ground, and the horizontal stakes fastened to them by ligaments of bark or of supple shoots of trees, and covered with green branches to protect the interior from the sun. Of wet there is no fear, except in the season of the periodical rains. These bowers are made large or small, according to the number of visitors likely to assemble.

During my stay at Adoua, I was invited to several weddings. Among others I was invited to assist at the marriage of an Abyssi-

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nian woman to a man of the country. When a wedding takes place in a town, as was the case on this occasion, the crowd is excessive. Invited or uninvited, everybody comes who has nothing better to do, or who is anxious to fill his stomach. A crowd of these hungry idlers crowd round the doors, and often endeavour to force an entrance where artifice or good words fail to procure it for them, and thus give a deal of annoyance to the servants appointed to keep the entrances.

These, however, are assisted by a number of young men from among the neighbours and friends of the house, who, on such occasions, volunteer their services as peace-keepers and waiters, or to make themselves generally useful. Several of these, armed like the door-keepers, with long wands, remain in the "dass" to keep order, to show people to their places, or to make way for new-comers by dismissing old ones.

About two o'clock on the day preceding the wedding, the father of the bride sent a servant to conduct me to the scene of festivity; but on our arrival at the front entrance we found the street completely blocked up by the crowd, principally soldiers, who were endeavouring to force their way in, which, however, was prevented by barricading the gates and strongly guarding them. It was not till after a quarter of an hour's hard squeezing and fighting that we gained an entrance. During the struggle I was amused at the contrivances which the mob had recourse to in the hope of passing in with me and my people. One fierce-looking soldier assisted me very much; for, by striking some, and swearing at and threatening others, he succeeded in clearing a passage to the door. My people, however, were too well known for him to pass as one of them, and he was refused admittance till I, in consideration of his zeal, protested that for that day he was in my service. Another who had an umbrella, walked close behind me holding it over my head as if it belonged to me. At length we entered.

The Abyssinian guests were squatted round the tables in long rows, feeding as if their lives depended on the quantity they could devour, and washing it down with floods of drink. I never could have believed that any people could take so much food; and certainly, if the reader wishes to see a curious exhibition in the feeding line, he has only to run over to Abyssinia and be present at a wedding feast. Imagine two or three hundred half-naked men and women in one room. All decorum is lost sight of; you see waiters, each with a huge piece of raw beef in his hands, rushing frantically to and fro in his eager desire to satisfy the voracious appetites of the guests, who, as he comes within their reach, grasp the meat, and with their long crooked swords, hack off a lump or strip, as the case may be, in their eagerness not to lose their share.

After the feast, the "dass" being cleared of all but a select party of the invited guests of the house and their attendants, in

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all about a hundred persons, it was announced that the bride was to be presented to us. She was accordingly brought in—carried like a sack of flour—on the back of a male relative, who trotted in with her, preceded by a number of persons each bearing a lighted taper, and followed by a number of women, who filled the air with their shrill cries of exultation. The bearer dropped his pack on a stool in front of the place where we, Franks, and the elders were sitting, and she received the benedictions of the party. Placing our hands on her head one after the other, we each expressed some words for her future welfare and happiness, and got our hands well greased for our pains. Music and dancing then commenced. Having kept up the dancing and jollification all night, the bridegroom (should the habitation of the bride be at some distance from his own) sets out at sunrise, followed by a host of friends and attendants, the number of whom, it may readily be conceived, does not much depend on any respect they feel for him personally, but is proportioned to the estimated generosity of his father-in-law elect, and to the quantity of bread, meat, and beer which they calculate on finding ready at his house. After him follow first his "arkees," who vary in number from six to twelve, according to the wealth and importance of the person. These "arkees" are chosen among themselves when boys. They agree when playmates together, that when either of them marries they shall reciprocally act as "arkees," or bridesmen, to each other. Their office and duty will be more fully explained by-and-by. The whole party is well dressed; those who have no clothes, or bad clothes, borrow good ones for the occasion. He who owns a horse or mule mounts it, but the others, especially the "arkees," who come out heavy swells, borrow every article of finery they can possibly lay eyes on, even to the silver amulets and chains worn by the women of the neighbourhood. Behind the bridegroom is borne a handsome silver-mounted shield, probably belonging to his master or some other great man, who may have been kind enough to lend it him for the occasion, and before him go a considerable number of men carrying guns, all borrowed.

The bridegroom himself mounts, probably for the first time in his life, a handsome mule, with its ornamented patch-work morocco saddle and brass ornaments, and with his cloth placed affectedly over his nose, carries himself gallantly, and looks as proud as if he were a king's son, and as if the gunners, shield-bearers, mules, finery, and all really belonged to him, though perhaps the day before he was toiling and cracking his whip behind his plough oxen.

When arrived near the bride's house, the nearest convenient place is selected, and the horsemen of the party commence galloping about, the gunners fire off their matchlocks, and the lances dance here and there, enacting altogether a sort of sham fight. This, I suppose, is done to divert the bridegroom's mind,

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lest he should be nervous on first entering the "dass." Arrived at the bridal bower, he takes his seat on the post of honour prepared for him, which is a couch covered with a carpet and cushions, and a canopy of white calico spread over his head to keep the dust from falling on him. And there he sits in state, his nose and mouth covered with his garment to make him look dignified. He and his friends keep to one side of the house, the bride's family and friends remaining on the other side. The ceremonies, of course, commence, as usual, with a voracious devouring of raw beef and its accompaniments; after which, when all have well eaten and drunk, the place is cleared of strangers, and the bride is carried in as on the preceding evening, accompanied by tapers, &c. This time, however, she is covered with a large cloth held over her like a pall, and is placed on a stool in front of the principal persons assembled. The bridegroom is then called, and asked if he wishes to marry her, to which he of course answers in the affirmative. Then they crook their little fingers together under the cloth; nay, even sometimes, I believe, kiss each other. Then certain wise admonitions are given to both by a priest, if there should happen to be one present, as well as by the elders in attendance; and the marriage settlement, or the agreement which each of them is to bring, is entered on, and this finishes the wedding ceremony.

A few days after the wedding, the bridesmen, dressing themselves up in all the ornaments they can collect, take a cobero, or small drum, and go singing and dancing before every house in the neighbourhood. If in the vicinity of a large town, where there are many visits to make, their peregrinations occupy several days, or even a week or more. Every person visited is expected to offer a present according to his circumstances. If, however, anyone should be stingily disposed, or by ill-luck not at home, they forcibly enter the house, and purloin anything they can lay their hands on, such as sheep, goats, or fowls, which may be straying about the yards. Even in the public market-places and streets they perpetrate the most audacious robberies. Two of them disguised will approach the wares of some seller, while a third, profiting by the concealment afforded him by their long garments, which they purposely leave trailing on the ground, squats behind them. By pretending to bargain for some article or other, they generally succeed in drawing off the attention of the vendor from his property, who being seated, naturally raises his eyes while talking to them, and their crouching confederate, watching his opportunity, purloins from beneath whatever he can lay hold of, and then makes quietly off. Nor do they scruple most cruelly to victimise even very poor people. Concealed in some nook or corner of one of the most frequented alleys leading to the market, they quietly watch till some country girl passes on her way thither, bearing on her head or shoulder, it may be, a piece of cotton cloth, the produce of some months' industry, when they suddenly spring

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out and snatch it from her from behind, and dodging round a corner, run off as fast as their legs can carry them. In the absence of any other notification of it, you may always know when any great wedding has recently taken place by the lamentations of the women, who run about the streets proclaiming, to the great amusement of the bystanders, how they have been treated. No one attempts forcibly to recover any article stolen from him, as such conduct would be in direct violation of the privileges of the "arkees," who, if questioned concerning a theft which they may have perpetrated, do not scruple to assert their innocence with the most solemn oaths. If any but an "arkee" should thus perjure himself, he would not only be considered a wretch unfit to associate with, but be liable to punishment for his crime. The bridesmen are, however, privileged persons, and when in office they may do anything without risking either their skins or their reputation. Notwithstanding, if a man miss anything he has only to offer a small present as a ransom, and they are obliged in honour to restore the stolen property, whatever it may be; but to obviate this restitution, when any eatable live-stock is stolen, it is immediately slaughtered and devoured, and the poor man goes back empty-handed. The whole of the profits of these, their begging visits and thefts, are collected and handed over to the bridegroom, to compensate in some measure for the expense he is put to in supplying them with plenty of food and drink for three or four weeks, during the whole of which time they remain in the house, taking it by turns to watch, some of them always remaining near the bride, whom they endeavour to amuse and divert in every possible way, in order that she may not regret too much her temporary separation from her family.

A. T. SIBBALD.

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SILVERMEAD.

CHAPTER X.

BETWEEN the above interview and the arrival of Lilla's promised letter on the Saturday morning, the two distinct men who inhabited our hero's body waged fierce war, and even went so far as to use violent and most abusive language one to the other. The disinterested lover, with his ready eloquence, his impetuosity and magnanimous ideas, alternately got the better or worst of the strife with the dutiful nephew—the politic and ambitious man of the world, who looked forward, not to one day basely clutching and hoarding heaps of gold, but also to that holding of the head aloft which wealth, combined with position, allows a man so sweetly to indulge in.

During the first twenty-four hours the latter individual most certainly got the best of the conflict; but as the portentous moment approached which was to bring to Horace that magic thing, the first letter from the first being he had ever loved, all his prudence, pride and policy, his anger at having fallen into a trap which was never laid for him, in short every feeling which was opposed to the despotic reign of Miss Harding in his heart and soul, seemed gradually to suffer a creeping paralysis, which utterly surprised and bewildered Horace; so that by the hour the servant brought him his letters, a little before breakfast time, he had grown to that state of mind that he feared nothing so much as that the promised missive should either hint at releasing him from vows so impetuously made, or in any otherwise savour of coolness or hesitation.

There were four letters for him this Saturday morning, all one a-top of the other, like a pack of cards. As certain gamblers will look at a decisive hand scrap by scrap, from dread of ending their suspense, either for good or ill, too suddenly, so Horace now slowly made a sort of fan of his four epistles, and thus brought his lady's letter to view bit by bit, and by slowest degrees. The top one was from his London tailor, the next from a scribbling farmer, who was always appealing to him against Mr. Brandling, the agent, and the third—Ha! that must be it! You see he never for a moment doubted that Lilla would keep her word. The shortest acquaintance with her would convince any one that what she promised she would fulfil. Horace had never before seen a line of her handwriting; but when now he first beheld it, it was

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so wonderfully like herself, that he felt he would have recognised it at a glance, without assistance from either monogram or post mark. The writing was easy, round and flowing, and oh, so clear! just like Camilla's limpid eyes.

As he slipped his forefinger inside the envelope to tear it open, however, the breakfast bell rung. Horace was too anxious for a peaceful perusal of the treasured contents to spoil that treat by a cursory glance, and he accordingly consigned the letter unopened to his inside breast pocket, and hurried down to confront his ever punctual uncle at table.

The meal presented no feature of interest, and was despatched, as by mutual consent, more quickly than usual. Horace drank an unaccustomed quantity of strong tea, but eat scarcely anything. No sooner free, than he seized his smoking cap as he ran through the hall; filled his pipe as he tripped down the lawn, whistling carelessly the while in very excess of feverish curiosity, and vaulting lightly over some rails at the lower end, he flung himself down in one of those heavenly spots—a hayfield without haymakers.

Here is the letter:—

"I cannot begin by calling you Mr.—and you would hardly expect me to venture on your Christian name just yet—I mean your Pagan name, for Horace never belonged to any saint that I heard of. You must call me first by mine, and then I will say 'dear Horace.' I like Horace; I think it a sweet name, but then, perhaps, that is because I like you. I am locked in my bedroom—by my own hand, I mean—to be quite quiet to write to you. I intend to write a long letter. I hope you like long ones? Tell me next time we meet—you must not answer this. I should so love to have a letter from you, but gran'ma would want to see it, and I would rather not get one at all than that. If she agrees not to look at your letters, I shall make you write me packets of them. You will be surprised to hear I have only just told her—gran'ma—about you. I put it off and put it off because—well first I must tell you that she and I don't get on very well. It is not all her fault. I blame myself very often about it. The last few days we have been very uncomfortable together. Horace, I want to have no secrets from you; yet there are things I hate to enter upon—quarrels, for instance. I think I meant in this letter to tell you everything, but now I feel it would be easier to me, and also easier to make you understand certain sad (here a word was erased) and complicated things by word of mouth, so I want you to come over on Monday about three. I will tell my gran'ma, and then we shall sure to be at home. Do come, *mind*. It is very important. Oh, I do want to see you. Monday is soon, and so you won't say I was wrong not to tell you certain things in my letter. But I will tell you what has just passed between gran'ma and me.

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"I said:

"'Gran'ma, I have been wanting to tell you something ever since I came back.'

"'Yes, love?' She always says 'yes, love,' even when she is angry. It means nothing and is only a habit.

"'But I have not had the opportunity. Mr. Acton was here all the morning, and ——'

"'Yes, never mind all that, tell me now.'

"'I have had a proposal.'

"'I said this without looking at her. You don't know how she has annoyed me lately. And, oh, is that the way I should have told her if I loved her! There, I have said it. It sounds so wicked, but I don't think God will punish me, because of the *reason*. She loves me in her own way, but to *others*, *some others*, she is so hard, and that is what hardens me, who am not naturally a hard girl.

"'A proposal, love! I think I can guess. Mr. Acton. It is he, is it not.'

"'Certainly not.'

"'Not he? Oh, I am sorry. I suppose then you have refused the other offer, whoever made it, as I am sure you know no one else well enough to accept him, and, indeed,' she added, drawing herself up, 'I cannot conceive who has presumed——'

"'It was no presumption! A great honour.'

"'Child, you take my breath away. It can't be old Lord ——'

"'It isn't Lord anybody.'

"'Then I give it up.'

"'It is Mr. Horace Brudenell.'

"'What, that boy of Sir Howard's!'

"'Sir Howard Brudenell's nephew.'

"'I had rather it was Acton.'

"'Why so, gran'ma?'

"'We know him so much better, and—he is so rich.'

"'I hate riches.'

"'Then you are a fool,' she said, laughing, 'But I daresay this one has money enough. Come and kiss me, love.'

"So I went and got the kiss, and then she sat holding my hand and said:

"'Though I should have preferred the other, and have even been making sure of it, I want to see you married before I die. And, well, what does Sir Howard say?'

"'I don't know. Perhaps he has not been told yet.'

"'Not told?' she was beginning, excitedly.

"'I can't tell,' I said, stopping her. 'I fancy he will wait for your consent before telling Sir Howard.'

"'I can hardly think,' she went on, 'that this boy'—she will call you a boy, you see, but it is too bad of her; I think you are *quite, quite a man*—'this boy would take so important a step without

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Sir Howard's full knowledge and approval. Such a course would be rash in the extreme, and might lead to the most disastrous consequences. But stay, I was forgetting another person whose opinion in the matter is of some consequence too. I mean yourself; though I suspect from your manner that you look upon Mr. Brudenell's suit with favour—eh? How is it? You did not refuse him.'

"'Oh, no, gran'ma.'

"'You accepted him, then?'

"I nodded my head.

"Presently I said—

"'I do not remember my formal question, nor do I think I pronounced the word "yes;" but I told him I would tell you about it, and of course, he knows I like him.'

"Then I ran away to write you this letter. I am—oh! so afraid you won't like it. It is not the least bit in the world like the one I meant to write, but I have often noticed on less important occasions what a difference it makes having the pen in one's hand. I mean in writing to my girl-friends; but now it is written, it has got to go. Dear me, what a length it is!

"*Mind* you don't forget. Monday at three. You can't think how important it is I should see you then, or what *serious* things I have to tell you. Good-bye. Yours,

"C. H.

"P.S.—I forgot to say gran'ma said, somewhere in the middle of our conversation, that I was behaving very badly to Mr. Acton, who, she is sure, has great hopes. I do not believe he cares for me except as an old friend. That is the only way I care for him. So, if you hear any gossip to the contrary just don't believe it. Mind you do not. I forbid you to be jealous any more. Don't forget you are not to write, but to call and ask for gran'ma on *Monday* at three. Good-bye.'"

That was the letter. Horace thought it a very odd one, and he was right. He asked himself whether he was not just a little disappointed, and then strove to persuade himself that he was not. To be sure, he had expected an unreasonable amount of delight from the perusal of these sheets of note paper. As it was, he was more puzzled than pleased, yet he was pleased—with most of it. The postscript he did not like. Why had Camilla written all that about Acton? There was an amount of *qui s'excuse s'accuse* about it, which rankled in Brudenell's mind. At the same time he could not deny that the general ring of the letter was candid and unstudied. True, but was this stamp which the young writer had given it the result of nature or deep calculation? Was it untoward circumstances alone which seemed ever to be drawing Horace to doubt of this girl who had enthralled him, or was he naturally

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suspicious; or, in fine, were there in this instance just grounds for his being so? Had not Miss Harding fallen into his arms a little too much like the proverbial garden thrush? Young men of Brudenell's age are not apt to under-rate their attractiveness, and he was no exception to the rule; yet this did not blind him utterly to the almost unnatural suddenness and completeness of the conquest, if conquest it were. A sudden and unromantic interruption befel his meditations at this precise point in the form of a tobacco pouch flung at his Apollo-like head, and his familiar, Jack Forbes, appeared upon the scene.

"Hallo, Jack! is that you?" and with this highly sensible question Brudenell greeted his only great friend and the being in all the earth—without, perhaps, excepting one—whom at that moment he was best pleased to see. "That was a good shot for a short-sighted man."

"How often am I to tell you that we of low vision cease to be so when we stick a glass in our eye? How could I sketch in the horizons in my little daubs if I couldn't see far?"

"True, I forgot your horizons."

"Naturally enough; your sense of beauty affects nearer and different objects, especially just now."

"How do you mean?"

"Come, Horace, don't be a hypocrite, to me of all men," said the *fidus Achates*, throwing himself down beside his friend and lighting up (I mean as to his pipe).

"What, you have observed!"

"I have observed! Ha, ha, ha! Oh, these lovers! these lovers! What, man? Do you suppose that because you are in love—and therefore for the time, no longer an accountable or observant being—that everybody else is in the same blissful state of—of—of 'cussedness'?"

"Do you mean to say you—you heard it noticed the other night by many people?"

"It was simply the talk of the room from the moment you danced your first Lancers with her."

"How did I show it?"

"How? As every ass—I beg pardon—as every fellow does. I don't know that I was ever asked to analyse the outward symptom of the disease before, but there's nothing more deuced easy. The main feature is a sheepishness which is unspeakably comic to the on-looker."

"Indeed!" This with a smile that was not joyful.

"Yé—es," drawled Jack, "you had that awfully——"

"Ha!"

"Now, old man, as a rule, you are not sheepish."

"I see."

"And that is what made it so absurd."

If you can imagine the persecution of a gnat being some

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distraction to you in grief, say at the death of your mother-in-law, you may conceive the effect of this conversation on our hero.

Still that effect was not pleasant. So all the world knew his secret, did they? Bother them! Why could not they, the world, have the sense to fall in love too?—it was a very pleasant thing to do, and so mind their own affairs. Of course, this was nonsense. How, for instance, could old little Dr. McFinn be expected to fall in love? And if he did, what chance was there of his passion being requited?

Suddenly Horace's thoughts took a more practical, and, alas! more alarming turn. If his love for Miss Harding was really the talk of that memorable ball room, was not his uncle certain to be informed of the discovery by the first loose-tongued gossip he might chance to meet.

Here was something palpably weightier than the sting of a gnat, but he kept it to himself. "It is confoundedly annoying, Jack," he said at last, "to think one can't admire a girl without having it commented on by every fool in the county."

"That's not the worst of it."

"How do you mean?"

"It's much worse for the girl."

"Well really, Forbes, I don't see how my respectful admiration —even if it makes me ridiculous——"

"Tut, tut, my good boy, I don't mean that."

"Then what the deuce do you mean?" asked Horace, his temper rising, not exactly against Jack, but the world in general.

"I mean that it was even more evident the other night—even than that you were a—a gone coon—that, that——"

"Do go on, can't you? I hate a fellow smoking when he's got anything to say, for he pauses to tantalise you whenever he chooses, under pretence of puffing away to keep his pipe alight."

"Well, then, I say it was patent to every one that Miss Harding was even spoonier on you than you on her."

"Never!"

"I swear it!"

"I never thought of that! To be sure I didn't dream she had shown anything."

And he thought to himself: "I must stand by her now more than ever! Aye, through fire and water!"

"I am very sorry to hear that," he told Forbes—"not, mind you, but that it flatters me, of course; but if obstacles should arise——"

"Obstacles! The devil," cried Jack, "are you there already? Then you mean to marry her?"

"What do you take me for?"

"Of course, of course, but after all, a mere ball-room flirtation —do you mean to say you have popped?"

By this time Horace's native good humour had so far returned

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—as regards his friend at least—that he got up and laying his hand on the other's shoulder, said—

"Jack, old fellow, I must make a clean breast of it, to you at least. I'll tell you all about it. Jack, you haven't the slightest idea how I adore that girl."

A tremendous squeeze of the hand was the confidant's sole reply, and then somehow Horace found that he could not see clear —not a yard—not as far as his short-sighted comrade. The landscape was all blurred. He was vastly surprised at this, and still more ashamed, so he turned away his head. But Jack, who was himself a regular girl at heart in a good sense, thought none the less of him for this little involuntary display of emotion; and he resolved to leave where it was his unfinished list of the comic features of the love complaint.

It then befel that as the two young men strolled about the fair and undulating park of Massing, on that beautiful spring morning, Horace took his friend entirely into his confidence, keeping back from him nothing whatever—not even his furious but now dispelled jealousy of young Acton, not even his uncle's hopes concerning Lady Susan Graye. And good Jack Forbes was thrice worthy of the trust so blindly placed in him. Honourable of course he was, and incapable of repeating a word. That is a common virtue; but he combined therewith two others which are not met with every day. He was sympathetic, and last not least, he loved Horace too truly to give him any advice or opinions for the mere sake of pleasing him. The latter had fortunately too much good sense to be hurt at Jack's candour. When an *épanchement* takes place under such unusually favourable circumstances, it is no wonder that he who confides, at least, should derive much solace and moral bracing up from the interview, and Horace felt, as they turned up the avenue towards the house and luncheon, that he would on no account have missed seeing Forbes that day, albeit that his last sentence was far from being of a purely comforting nature.

"To sum up then, old man," Jack said, "here is your position. It is a very mixed one, presenting many discouraging difficulties, balanced—I might perhaps say more than balanced—by certain favourable features of great weight. Thus, if your having nothing of your own, and your uncle's avowed disapproval of the match, are to be set down as dead against you, on the other hand it must be in fairness remembered that you have won the lady's heart, will no doubt have the support of Lady Prendergast to the utmost of her great energy, and above all, that you are very young and, if the worst come to the worst, you have lots of time and all the world before you to work your way. So, with such a prize in view as Miss Harding's hand, you are not the man I take you for if you will ever say 'die.'"

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Chapter XI.

On entering the dining-room Horace was not a little perturbed to find that Sir Howard had guests, and these none other than the Most Noble the Marquis of Caulfield and his august spouse and daughter. His uncle at once directed Horace, somewhat ostentatiously the latter thought, to a vacant place at the stately Lady Susan's side, who was all smiles—as far as such a being could find it in her dignity to be all smiles—to receive him.

Since the event which Horace, somewhat profanely perhaps, termed a merciful dispensation of Providence—I mean that very otherwise unimportant death of the aged cousin, which had robbed the county ball of the Caulfield lustre, Horace had mentally shelved Lady Susan, until her name had accidentally cropped up in the course of making a clean breast of it to his confidant, and he felt just a little awkward about how he should treat, under the assembled watchful eyes, this vast embodied honour which he had now so completely made up his mind to reject.

I must stop here for a moment to explain—not that, believe me, I think you can have any doubt on the subject, only there are other readers who may—that Horace had given no sort of hint to Jack that her ladyship felt the slightest preference for him, but had put all upon Sir Howard's sanguine ambition. Did he show Jack his inamorata's letter? By no means; not so much as a square eighth of an inch of its precious envelope. Some, nay much, of the purport of its contents he necessarily explained to Jack, but as to submitting the magic sheet to any eye but his own—no, my good friend, in Brudenell's world they don't show ladies' letters, unless little pink or blue invitations to lawn tennis and afternoon tea.

But to resume.

"And so you really go up to town next week?" asked Sir Howard of Lady Caulfield.

"Yes, I think about Thursday; Caulfield is wanted for a division on Friday, and it never does to put things off to the last moment; we dine at the French embassy on Saturday."

"And when shall we see you, then?"

This time it was Lady Susan who spoke, questioning Horace.

"I?" he answered, half absently, "oh, I don't suppose I shall go up at all."

"Not!" was all the young lady uttered, but there was a world of reproof in her tone.

"What nonsense are you talking, nephew?" interrupted Sir Howard, with that peculiar expression of face and voice which, to the onlookers, is meant to pass as banter, but to him addressed is intended to convey—

"I say, you young idiot, what are you about? What the devil's

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the use of my plotting for you, if this is the mull you make of it all?"

Horace's one thought just now was to avoid brushing his relative the wrong way. Colouring up, he laughingly declared he was wildly delighted to don his war paint and invade Babylon; but persisted at the same time in declaring that this was the first intimation which had been vouchsafed him of the good news. He then proceeded mentally to bless the charming limits which conventionality places upon intercourse among the "upper ten."

"Positively," he gratefully reflected, "in this present year of grace what passes between such a couple as myself and my fair neighbour, on an occasion like this, would be almost identical, whether we were as we are, or whether I felt myself to be her devoted slave for life! Shyness and love would, in the latter case, make me as reserved as utter indifference and love for another render me under the actual circumstances! All hail, then, artificiality!"

"How did you enjoy your ball the other night, Mr. Brudenell?" asked Lady Caulfield.

"Well, it was like most country balls—rather a crush for a couple of hours, and then as decided a collapse."

"I don't think you had much of a loss, Lady Susan," put in Jack.

"But we had," said the hypocritical Horace, right gallantly, to please his uncle, whose eye was upon him.

"You must make amends by being liberal of waltzes to him in London," Sir Howard said, improving the occasion. "I shall pack him off in ten days or so, and insist on his doing the season religiously in all its phases. You are not aware, perhaps, that it is his first. He has had, to be sure, for the last few years, a stray week or fortnight of it now and then, but this time I mean to make him do it in style."

Here the baronet tossed off his second glass of brown sherry, and went on—

"Nothing so bad for a young man as to get countrified. It is very good for the health, I daresay, but ruination to his manners. Am I not right, Lady Caulfield?"

"Eh?—oh dear yes, most—most undoubtedly," protested her ladyship, who hardly knew so much as the bare subject referred to, for the dear marchioness was very much of an epicure, and her spirit happened at the moment to be riveted upon a cheese *soufflé*, but her lord, though hardly master, who was familiar with the situation (she scarcely ever listened to him at meals), came to the rescue:

"Oh, to be sure—to be sure—yes; oh, dear gracious me, how right you are, Sir Howard! Town life, in moderation of course, teaches a young man to know the world and himself. Nothing so much brushes away the cobwebs of the mind, nothing—nothing."

Lord Caulfield repeated the last word, not with any view to

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emphasis, but to gain time as to what to say next. It was a habit he had contracted in the House of Lords. He, too, now took a glass of wine and pursued:

"How many a young fellow, under the stagnation of the country, has brooded over some stupid a-a-*amourette*—a—yes, *amourette*—until he has mistaken it for the master passion of his life—sometimes it is a little rustic thing utterly below him, sometimes a girl more in his own position perhaps, but practically, either from want of money or other causes, equally out of the question, as far as *he* is concerned."

Here came an emphatic "Quite so," from his host, worth a round of applause.

"Very well then, very well then," continued Lord Caulfield, "what happens? If left among the cabbages, he either makes a fool of himself by marrying his—his rosebud, or his friends break his heart for him by sending him away. But I say let the same young fellow only come up to town, let him attend a few of those great annual—um—a—girl-shows—the chief balls of the season——"

"Oh Caulfield, for shame! We are not in Turkey—and before Susan, too," put in his wife.

"Fudge, my dear," he rejoined; "I am only calling things by their proper names. I say let him see what England can do in the way of exhibiting the cream of her beauty, grace, charm, dignity, et cetera—" and here his lordship cast an imperceptible glance at his daughter—"and the chances are that if anybody, three weeks later, asks the young fellow after his little derelict down in his native shire, he will have forgotten her very name; and nothing could induce him to believe he ever seriously cared for her."

"Why papa, you are quite eloquent to-day," exclaimed Lady Susan; "why don't you talk like that in the House?"

There was a laugh, and then a general move to the gardens; and Horace determined to go with the current, and just ascertain whether there was a tacit plot between his uncle and the Caulfields to throw him alone with Lady Susan. He more than half suspected that the hereditary legislator's flow of oratory was inspired by local gossip, and aimed at poor sweet little Lilla and himself. Needless to say this thought made his very blood boil, and caused him to take unnumbered oaths, that even if the persecuting wretches who composed Sir Howard's cabal, as he termed it—and be sure he failed not to join Miss Laffinch's name to the others—were to poison his betrothed bride, and drag her lifeless to his feet, even then wild horses should not force him to marry Lady Susan Graye. Not that this spleen was especially directed against that dull and statuesque young aristocrat. No, he believed she was simply obeying the orders of those who had brought her up, to deem their commands infallible. With such a nature then as hers, it was highly probable that if she did care for him a little, her feelings were as obedient as her outward acts, and that she could stop

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loving upon command as promptly as she could enter upon that interesting occupation. And Horace pitied the poor girl for the somewhat ridiculous part which her noble parents—it was not very easy to tell why—had elected that she should play. But then Sir Howard was such a grand diplomatist, that Lord and Lady Caulfield were almost as complete puppets in his hands as was Lady Susan in theirs.

The event now proved his suspicions to be correct. Two minutes after they had all left the dining-room, the fair Susan, Jack, and Horace, were isolated together—Forbes purposely spoiling the game, in supposed compliance with his friend's unexpressed wishes—but in another moment or so Lady Caulfield's voice was heard hailing from afar.

"Mr. Forbes! Mr. Forbes! Oh, come, make haste, and help me out of a difficulty. I can't undo the boat!"

This was almost too much even for her daughter, who had at least all the usages of society at command, if little else; and she turned as if to detain Jack, saying:

"Oh, Mr. Forbes, I warn you, don't go. Mamma is so devoted to rowing, that if she once gets you on the lake, you will never escape."

But she was quite safe in saying this, Jack being far too sharp to take words for more than they were worth, and declaring, "It will be an honourable slavery at any rate," off he ran.

"I wonder what you are going to say to me," said our hero to himself.

There was a short pause as they strolled into the shrubbery. Then the lady said:

"Only think, Mr. Brudenell, of your having been so little in London. I should never have guessed it."

"No!—and why?"

"Because you are not a bit countrified," she pursued, laughing, "I mean not in the least."

"Indeed!"

"You know you are not, and then you have such lots to say for yourself, which is generally a sign, I have found, of people having been about a great deal. Don't you think it is so?"

"Well, I have not had your opportunities of judging. I suppose though, that it is with ideas in a human being as with sweets in a conjuror's box."

"I do not understand." Poor Lady Susan lived in constant fear of people saying things too clever for her comprehension, and of being made to appear stupid thereby.

"I mean," added Horace, "that the more you take out the more remains in; whereas, even I have noticed that great readers —I don't mean of novels—who, you would think, had their minds so richly stored, if they only lack the habit of conversation, are wonderfully apt to be either silent as the tomb, or heavy as lead."

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"Quite so," was all she felt equal to remarking. This talk might be highly instructive, but then it might also take place across any dinner table. Lady Susan had a vague inkling that discussion upon abstract or abstruse subjects was hardly what she had been sent into the shrubbery for. She changed the conversation:

"You must mind and come and see us as soon as ever you come to town. Remember—200, Belgrave Square. Mamma is always at home on Thursdays;" and she looked up with her best smile at her companion's face.

"Poor thing," he thought, "if people angled in this unsophisticated manner for trout, I wonder how many fish would be caught."

They emerged upon a *parterre* of flowers.

"Oh, what lovely roses!" exclaimed Lady Susan, with a little real enthusiasm.

"Yes, considering we are hardly in May, it is not a bad show."

"May I pick some?"

"Oh, pray allow me to save you that trouble."

"Very well, if you will pick a great number for me, I will pick this white one for you. That will be a division of labour."

"Oh, dear—oh, dear!" mentally sighed Horace, "what a dull thing is love making with the love left out!"

They had walked round nearly to the spot where Lady Caulfield and Jack Forbes had tempted the fickle wave, but the water was hidden from them at this moment by a massive clump of rhododendrons.

Hark! there is a splash, a woman's frantic scream, a man's loud cry for help; and our rose-pluckers rush wildly to the rescue.

Chapter XII.

What is going on this same Saturday afternoon at Silvermead?

Lady Prendergast sits erect in her favourite high-backed chair what will not custom make comfortable—in her favourite room, —the state drawing-room. The old lady has a soul above boudoirs and *les petits appartements* generally. She has likewise a horror of dressing gowns, tea gowns, and all such apologies for being clad; confounding them a good deal with night gowns. Indeed, she is a rather full-dress old lady all round; seldom condescending in her own attire to any less stately materials than Lyons' velvet at a guinea a yard, or satins and gros-de-naples, which "come into that neighbourhood," as the "slangites" would put it. She is, in fact, the sworn enemy to the present craze for lounging away our lives; and, right or wrong, she will most certainly live and die true to the traditions which produced her. Camilla stands a few feet off, and Cyril Acton is taking leave, hat in hand, after an

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afternoon call. What has passed between these three is apparently of a momentous and exciting nature, for the two young people seemed flushed and anxious, while Lady Prendergast has a deeper line than usual between her brows, and steadies her voice with difficulty as she says:

"No, Mr. Acton, I am not angry—not angry with you at least. I am sorry that you should have taken so much trouble in vain."

"I am very sorry to have failed, of course."

Here he glanced at Camilla, from whose eyes there shot flames of fire as they met Acton's without a gleam of shame or confusion. They seemed to say—

"Heed her not, she shall never subdue me."

"I do not wish you," pursued the old lady, "to leave this house with any lingering misapprehension on your mind. Have I made myself quite clear?"

"I—I think so."

"My conclusions are two, not hard to remember, if you separate them from all the discussions we have had to go into. First then, your request is refused once and for all. Secondly, in consequence of that refusal, as also on account of the new circumstances in which my grandchild now finds herself, I must beg, nay, I insist, that you meet her no more."

"Yes, Lady Prendergast, there is no danger of my forgetting either of those points."

This Mr. Acton said with unconcealed bitterness.

"As for Camilla, I have expressly forbidden her to see or communicate with you again, and she is bound by every law, human and divine, to show me obedience. For yourself, I know you well enough to feel sure that you will make it a point of honour not to tempt this misguided girl to disobey me. Personally, I need hardly tell you that I am very, very sorry that for a long time at least we shall meet no more."

Lady Prendergast here extended her hand, which he took, and they exchanged a mutual "Good-bye."

"Ring the bell, Camilla, will you?" she said. "They will bring your horse round."

"Thank you so much, but I told them I would come to the stables. Good-bye."

"Grandma, I don't think this bell rings. I will try the one in the hall," and despite a stern "Camilla!" from her relative, which she affected not to hear, she and Cyril Acton disappeared from the room together.

"I dare not walk round with you," she said, in a hurried whisper. "Oh! how shall I ever thank you?"

"Lilla, when you know I am more than repaid by——"

"Oh, bless you!" she went on, wringing his hand, her head half turned back lest they should be unawares watched. "Oh, I am ashamed to ask the question, but—you will be there?"

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"I swear it!" he said, pressing to his lips the little white hand which still held his.

And he was gone, while Camilla flew back to her grandmother somewhat indifferent, it must be owned, to the scolding which she well knew awaited her.

"Camilla," began the old lady, "do you think me a fool?"

"By no means," returned the girl, defiantly, as though to say she might think many unfavourable things of her, but not that.

"Then why do you think you can deceive me?"

"But do I think so?"

"It seems so. Do you imagine I do not know why you went out with Mr. Acton?"

The girl was silent.

"I feel convinced," pursued the other, in a tone pathetic from the horror which the words she was saying inspired her with, "that in spite of the awful sin which it involves, you have asked Acton to meet you again."

Another silence.

"Do you hear? Speak!"

"What you said was not a question. You said you were convinced; you asked me nothing."

"This is equivocation, girl. I command you to answer me! Did you ask that young man to meet you again—yes or no?"

"N—no."

"Did you agree to meet him?"

"I did not."

"Not to write or be written to?"

"No."

"All this on your honour?"

"Am I in the habit of telling lies?"

"You are not, thank God; but I have a right, and I choose to ask you all this on your honour. Have you spoken truly?"

"I have."

The girl had been standing since she re-entered the room, leaning with both arms on one of those low-seated high-backed chairs called a *prie-dieu*, a concession of Lady Prendergast to the comfort of the degenerate. She was facing her grandmother, who habitually sat with her back to the windows, and the light which now streamed in through them fell full upon the pale and resolute, but withal apparently candid face of the granddaughter.

This unexpected denial staggered the fine old lady visibly.

"Camilla," she said, in a very low and solemn voice, "I have ever found you truth itself. I am bound to believe that your words now are *literally* true, if no more. Still, I fear—I know that you are keeping something back from me. Child," she went on, and her voice lost its sternness, and became on a sudden so piteous that even Camilla, who loved her not, and who had especially hardened her heart against her on this occasion, seemed sensibly moved

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by it—"Child, you know I am miserable; a word from you can set me at rest. What was your true object in leaving the room just now? Oh, I am no longer commanding—I entreat."

"No, no, gran'ma. I——"

"Not over there; here, here in my arms. You know I live but for you; that, if I press you to tell me all, it is only and solely for your good."

When the stern grow tender they are endowed with a special and very powerful fascination. Camilla may have felt this now, for a slight thrill of emotion ran through her, and she had a certain pity for Lady Prendergast. But she never moved from where she was.

"Why," she asked herself, "if I am all in all to her, would she not listen to Cyril's prayer? Unbounded love means unbounded sacrifice. I will not be deceived by her. She may not know she is speaking falsely, but I know it. She would rather see me dead at her feet, with all her boasted love for me, than bend where I want her to bend. That is loving herself first, not me, as she pretends." Then aloud, "I will come to you, grandma; I will kiss you and thank you for your love, because all this is what I can do. Ask me nothing more to-day. I have spoken the truth to you. I will answer or tell you nothing more, either because there is nothing more to tell or because I cannot tell it. Why pain me by making me repeat this again and again? It is dreadful."

She had come slowly across to where the ancient dame sat, knelt—actually she, Camilla, knelt—on the stool at her feet, and putting her arms round her grandmother, gave her the very best embrace she could command.

"Ah!" said her ladyship, between two moods; "in one thing, at least, you are my own very child! When you do say, 'I won't,' there's an end of it."

It is easier to surround a fortress than to get inside, and poor Lady Prendergast thought of this as she sat there to-day encircling the fair young being with her aged arms, whose heart she knew only too well that she could not enter.

"And now, gran'ma, dear," said the girl, "I feel tired and worn out by all this—this piece of work we have had. I want to be alone. I think I could sleep, for I had a bad night. Please let me go to my room and lie down till dinner-time."

And without waiting for formal permission, she gave her relative another kiss, and fled away to the solitude she yearned for.

Perhaps we shall find that Camilla Harding had still more need of a good sound afternoon's sleep, with a view to the night of this particular day, than was even shadowed forth in the above exit speech of hers.

"Ha!" thought the old lady, as she took refuge from the hard things of life in the pleasant ones of fiction, and resumed the half-finished novel at her side, "what a blessing that Heaven still

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spares me vigorous eyes! By their help I am independent of all the world. Heigho! though, I wish I could find out how to make my little Lilla love me!"

Chapter XIII.

The accident to Lady Caulfield had no serious consequences. It was, indeed, from every aspect far more comic than alarming; arising as it did in the highly undignified manœuvre on her part of catching a crab, and thus upsetting the very small boat in which she and Jack Forbes were. They were no sooner in the water—a fact which, as neither of them could swim a yard, terrified them beyond measure—than they found themselves, to their intense delight, on land: land, that is at the bottom of the water—the lake, which was for the most part very deep, being fortunately but about three feet six in depth at that particular spot.

As Horace and Lady Susan reached the brink on one side, Sir Howard and Lord Caulfield did so on the other; and the only wonder is, how these four well-bred personages managed to keep their risible faculties within any reasonable bounds.

There, at some twenty yards from the shore, stood the drowners, who had called so lustily for help, clinging to each other in a fashion which looked like nothing but the most tremendous hugging. Of course the lady would have clung to a post in exactly the same way, and poor dear Jack thought of nothing but supporting her somewhat massive person; but reality and effect are too vastly different things. They had both in the first plunge been wholly submerged, and their hair—including that which belonged to the illustrious noblewoman by purchase—and every stitch of garments which they wore, were of course as soaked as they could possibly be, and adhered to their persons like the scanty drapery of an antique statue.

And there they were, and there they had to remain, for no immediate assistance could possibly be rendered them. Had Horace, for instance, plunged in and swum to the very spot, of what conceivable use would it have been to them? No, either the only other boat must be got out, and it had not been used for months, being out of repair, or else the one which now floated away in the distance, keel upwards, must be recovered, manned, and sent to the rescue; and then it was doubtful whether it would bear three persons to shore without a recurrence of the catastrophe.

Be it borne in mind that wading was quite out of the question, because the comparatively shallow spot on which the luckless pair now stood was a kind of subaqueous plateau, and surrounded on all sides by deep water.

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Much delay, therefore, was inevitable; the water was cold, and the sufferers' teeth chattered and their frames shook as if in the most violent palsy. Finally, the wind blew the capsized skiff to shore, some gardeners went round to land it, and carry it to the spot nearest the shipwrecked pair; and then Horace put off in it, and on reaching them—having while on land divested himself of his coat and waistcoat—he jumped overboard, and with what little assistance Jack could render, he succeeded in lifting the exhausted marchioness into that boat in which she had embarked so boldly not half an hour before. He then swam to the shore with the little bark and its heavy tenant in tow, and the lady at last was received by her family more dead than alive. He now went back for his friend Jack, and did likewise for him.

Meanwhile, a room had been prepared for her ladyship, and when they had got her comfortably to bed, such a quantity of hot grog was poured by different hands down her throat, that besides being horribly scalded about that region and her mouth, the poor lady was made—well—most suspiciously talkative, of course all with the best intentions in the world.

Jack Forbes, not being so illustrious an individual, was suffered to content himself with such attentions as he might choose to bestow upon himself, which were almost *nil*.

As to Sir Howard, when he found that the little *contretemps* was likely to have no serious consequences, he began to look upon it quite as a providential blessing. He insisted upon the Caulfields sending off for such baggage as they might require for a couple of nights, and was uncommonly proud of the dash and generalship exhibited by his beloved nephew under Lady Susan's eye, and for the deliverance from her awful position of that rich young lady's mamma. The worthy matron could not, of course, be expected to appear at dinner, but the choicest morsels were religiously sent up to her room; and the rest of the party, with the addition of Vicar Larch, were particularly merry that evening around Sir Howard's mahogany, for it is well known that few things are more exhilarating than the reaction after a danger escaped.

"Now is your time," whispered his uncle to Horace, on their way to the drawing-room, giving him quite an affectionate squeeze of the arm. And so it was, no doubt, to everybody concerned, Horace only excepted. But what is the use of having a ball at your feet, pray, if you don't care to kick it?

Horace was insatiable in making the fair Susan sing and play to him—it saved him the trouble of talking to her. She was a good, sound, cold musician, who, if she never moved, neither did she offend you.

A wonderful middle course is that of making a girl sing you song after song.

You exclaim:

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"Oh, how charming! You cannot think how exquisitely that suits your voice! Might I—would it be too much to ask for it over again? Oh, thanks, enormously!"

Such jargon as this sounds very enthusiastic; satisfies for the moment, at least, the young person, if she care for you; and yet —oh, crowning blessing!—it binds you to nothing.

And so the evening wore away. But Horace's eyes kept glancing furtively at the clock quite as often as they were directed to the noble singer's classic face. He owned to a slight headache, which the events of the lake rendered only natural, and the siren, with thrice-welcome consideration, herself proposed a somewhat early break-up on that account. But no sooner had a general good-night been bidden, than Horace sought the old butler, and telling him he was certain he should never close an eye all night unless he went out first for a ramble, arranged that one of the back doors should remain unbarred, he being provided with the key thereof. To change his evening clothes for a suit of tweeds was the affair of a few moments, and then, with a feeling of infinite relief, our hero rushed forth into one of those grand flooding moonlights which rival, if they do not surpass, the beauty of the sunniest day.

And what is his errand, and whither is he bent? In sooth he knows not. As the truly devout see in all the universe but one grand temple, so a lover deems that any corner of it is a meet place for being in spirit with his beloved. An hour, but one little hour of blessed solitude beneath the starlit dome of heaven, was all the young man consciously sought as he issued feverishly from his ancestral halls.

Yet not more surely does the homing pigeon wing its flight to the parent dovecot, than a lover instinctively wends his way towards that particular spot of earth where his lady dwells. Why the very horizon on that side looked brighter than at any other point of the compass, and there was in the sky which flickered and gleamed over Silvermead a kind of hopeful brightness that seemed to beckon him unto her he loved. At first his rapid steps lay by slender pathways so little trodden that at times they would have been hard to follow save by one familiar with their every turn. Stile after stile he lightly sprang over; dale, lea, copse and streamlet all in sequence greeted the wanderer in their silver splendour, and then after about two miles had been traversed he emerged upon the high road. This he also pursued for nearly the like distance, and the rapid exercise he had taken began to shew its beneficial effect upon mind and body. The night was warm and balmy, while not a breath of wind disturbed even the topmost plumes of those trees which boasted the earliest verdure. A wholesome glow now pervaded Horace's frame, and his head-ache —a somewhat severer one than he had deigned to own to—was entirely gone. A sincere feeling of pity stole over him for such

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of his luckless fellow creatures as were losing this glorious night in ignorant sleep, but presently he reflected that unless they loved—loved a being like his Camilla—even a night of enchantment such as this would be bereft of half its eloquent rapture. And where was one other terrestrial angel like to her to be found? Ah, where indeed? So fragile, yet so brave; so soft, yet so firm of purpose, so——He was just striking off from the highway in the great woods that stretch away toward Silvermead, when his reverie was suddenly cut short by the sight of a countryman bearing a load, and coming slowly towards the road by the very bridle path which he himself was about to follow. The sack which he carried on his back caused him to stoop considerably, and thus he had evidently not yet seen Horace at the moment that the latter became aware of his presence. "Confound the fellow," muttered our hero to himself, "if this rustic happens to recognise me, how shall I account for my presence here, and who knows what strange tales it may give rise to!" He was about to step aside and conceal himself until the man had passed, when his design was frustrated by a small terrier dog, the property of the countryman, which had been dawdling behind after a rabbit, but now dashed furiously forward to clear the road for his master, with a degree of fuss, noise, swagger and bounce only to be met with in belligerents such as these very small dogs, who are secretly yet painfully aware that their real means of aggression or defence are ridiculously minute.

"Toozer, Toozer, quiet, wall'ee," said the fellow, looking up, and recognising quality. "A begs pard'n, a'm shooer—hey! blessed if it bain't Meyster Horrus frey hoop at Grange."

"Ah, Adam," rejoined the young gentleman, remembering the night bird at once as a middle-aged farm servant employed by one of his uncle's outlying tenants, "and what brings you so far afield, and at a time when all honest folk should be abed?"

"Nay, nay, Meyster Horrus, be no hard on a poor fellow; I've been but faggotin' for the missus' fire. It's sore times for a day labourer with a wife and six little uns to keep on twelve shillin' a week."

Horace was not sorry to have established a "funk," as he vulgarly put it, in this man's mind.

He improved the occasion.

"Faggots indeed! and how many of them have four legs, if no worse? What! my uncle's keepers are too sharp for you, are they, and so you trudge over to plunder my friend Lady Prendergast?"

"Noa, noa, God bless her honour, I wod ney rob her for kingdoms, an' she sey good to the poor folk. She gev' us flannels i' the winter for the babbies and——"

"Now then, Adam," said Horace, stamping in pretended anger,

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"no more of your jawing, but down with that sack, open it, and I'll judge for myself."

The man evidently saw that his best chance lay in obedience. He had been up before Sir Howard for poaching some half-dozen years ago; but he rightly surmised that of that dread chapter of his history "the young squoire," as Horace was called, knew nothing. Fortunately for Adam, sport had proved shockingly bad that night, and but a single rabbit was discovered among the firewood. This he swore that Toozer had killed unurged and entirely upon his own personal responsibility, and Horace who, as we have seen, had reasons of his own for conciliating the goodwill of the fellow to-night, now said in a kindly tone, that he supposed he must accept Adam's version of the situation; and even went so far, or rather fell so low, as to toss the latter half-a-crown, not, as he basely declared, to compensate him for the trouble of emptying his sack, but alas, for the highly reprehensible purpose —and one not unknown, it is said, to the great ones of this world —of hush money.

The man's fright being now allayed, his faculties, such as they were, soon recovered from the paralysis which the sight of our lover had so suddenly brought on. As he repacked his famous sack, he poured forth a perfect torrent of thanks, in the very midst of which, however, he stopped dead short, and stood for a few moments utterly still—his mouth wide open and his eyes glaring wildly at Horace.

"What the devil's the matter now?" cried the young man, who could not but laugh at the tragic attitude into which his humble interlocutor had so abruptly fallen. "Speak, man, do you hear? Are you struck dumb?"

Adam, thus adjured, broke forth in a tone of the deepest mystery—

"Hoo, but a'd clean forgot! Wall, to be shoor, a'm powerful glad to meet yer honour this night." Not to inflict you with more of the jargon than necessary, let me say that he proceeded to inform the astonished Horace that they two were not the only prowlers of this fateful night, and that he had been at the moment of their meeting in deep confab with his apology for a conscience as to whether he ought not to proceed at once to Silvermead House and boldly give the alarm, or at least follow the marauders and keep a keen eye on their proceedings. He declared that he had seen two men, about a quarter of an hour before, creeping along, evidently with great caution, in the shadow of what was known as the long plantation, and in the direction of the house. He was too far off to see much more than this for certain—some four or five hundred yards—but he felt pretty sure they were young men and dressed like gentlemen. He was quite persuaded they were not gamekeepers. It took some minutes for our hero to disentangle the above substance from the confusion of words—

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"hoo's" and "heys" and other exclamations—in which the peasant described what he had seen. He then proceeded to take deep but rapid council with himself.

Adam had worked his own spirit into a state of quite unwonted excitement, exhilarated as he was by the reaction from his fear, the acquisition of half-a-crown, and above all, the immense importance which "th' young squoire" so evidently attached to his words. He was prodigal of advice and assistance.

"If 'ee loiks a'll coom wi' thee un will——"

"Hush, man, can't you?" said Horace, severely; "if you won't hold your tongue, how the devil can I think?"

"I ax yer pard'n humble, meyster Horrus, a'll——"

"Silence, I say!"

"Yees, shoorlie;" and at last he was dumb.

It required no clairvoyance for Horace to attribute the presence of these mysterious wanderers with designs of some sort or other upon the peace and happiness of Camilla Harding. His soul being full of her, he would naturally—and rightly or wrongly—connect any strange event occurring in her immediate vicinity with her whom he so passionately loved, and whom he had till now, at least, every reason to believe as pure and good as she was charming.

Had Adam reported the presence of but one unquiet spirit, the puzzle would not have been so great. Since Miss Harding was to his own eyes so adorably fair why might she not have captivated, all unknown to herself, other adorers, and why should not any one of these, finding his couch a mockery, as far as repose was concerned, have quitted it for the romantic if unsatisfactory object of gazing awhile at the windows of his divinity?

But *two* men! That was the wonder. What could two individuals possibly be about? Lovers do not hunt in couples. No, it was far more like thieves.

What puzzled Horace the most was whether to retain the company of Adam, or bid him begone home with his load. There were obvious arguments to be urged on both sides of the question. In case of violence, either to himself or others, the countryman was sure to show plenty of sturdy British pluck, and of his loyalty there could be no question. But physical danger is the last thing to occupy the attention of a spirited young fellow of two-and-twenty; and our hero was far more afraid of finding Adam in the way than of missing the assistance of his strong arm—more frightened of his loose tongue on the morrow at the village "pub," than of presently finding himself one against two, with nothing but his fists to protect him.

Such then being the train of his considerations, it is no wonder that, after a few moments of hurried thought, he turned to the labourer, and said—

"Adam, my mind's made up; you swear to do as I bid you?"

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"Ay, ay, shoor, meyster."

"Then get you gone home as fast as you can, never stopping nor looking back. Tell no soul that you have seen me or those others to-night, and I'll never say a word about you."

The man endeavoured in his uncouth way to remonstrate, but in vain, so swinging his sack once more over his shoulder, and with a parting "Ma-y sarvice to yer honour," Adam trudged off to the bosom of his family.

Horace heaved a sigh of intense relief at seeing him depart, and then, making straight for Silvermead, he hurried on his way. For something over a mile he saw nothing, and no incident of any kind occurred. He strode along, now following, now quitting, a bridle path that wound about in a manner which showed that its constructors had been more in search of beauty than directness, and thus his course lay alternately through thick woods and across the open park. Horace felt at this period of his ramble that his spirits were rising at every stride. Whether his inborn love of adventure thrilled at the slight element of danger which the rustic's revelations had imparted to this night watch, or whether a cruel fate, as is often the case, mocked him with exultant feelings to render the reaction still more poignant, certain it is that Horace's frame was now strung to the very utmost, and the presentiment which filled him that something momentous was about to occur was wholly of a hopeful and propitious kind.

He was just emerging from a little copse, at not much more than a mile from the house, when even his brave young heart was startled from all its self-possession by a loud sound which, of all possible ones, was the last to be expected in that place, and at that time—to the degree that not a cannon going off in his vicinity would have more astonished him. This was the shrill and prolonged neighing of a horse; there was nothing but deer in Silvermead Park, and Horace, on following the sound and turning a dense corner of the plantation to his right—which shut off the animal from view at the moment he had heard it—now beheld, full in the moonlight, and tied by the bridle to a tree, a white-stockinged chestnut hack, which, to his still more utter bewilderment, he instantly recognised as a recent purchase of his friend Mr. de Basle, and of whose points the latter had asked his opinion as they met on the road not ten days before. On seeing him the spirited young animal neighed again more loudly than before.

"What in the name of all that's conceivable can our worthy M.P. be doing all these miles away, in the middle of the night?" exclaimed Horace under his breath.

Then, like a flash of lightning that kills you even while it dispels the darkness, the thought struck him—

"Acton!"

Yes, Acton was the guest of the de Basle's still, and now it was doubtless he, who under some specious pretext of riding in another

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direction, had borrowed the blood hack, and galloped over to Silvermead. And why?—

> "Why—ah why?
> Construe me that! The knot lies there!
> What matters any why? O God! the 'It is'
> Makes the calamity!"

Not quite so, however, in this instance, for if Acton came not hither for Camilla, little cared Horace whether he were here or no. But there was no proof—and as this new light flitted through his brain, it gave a dying glimmer to his hopes—no proof that even if Acton did come to woo her, it was at her wish, by her knowledge or permission.

Be the event what it might there was nothing for it but to push on and see—to rush upon his fate and learn it, even should it mean despair. He hurried off for the house, the wildest thoughts coursing through his burning brain—dreams, and visions too vague for words to express, and yet so vivid, so terribly real, to his o'er-wrought fancy, that he believed they were already taking place. 'Midst it all, to one faith he firmly clung—Camilla was true. He would come upon the scene, breathless indeed, yet giant-strong, to behold her seized by ruthless arms. She, fainting, screams, calling upon a name—his own. He hurls her aggressors to the ground and clasps her to his breast—his pride for ever!

"Oh, on—on—on!" he cries from his very soul, for suspense is killing him.

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PRIVATE BENSON'S LEGACY.

A STRANGE EXPERIENCE IN THE LIFE OF AN OLD SOLDIER.

SOME few years ago, I had the good fortune to be spending my Christmas in the country house of a very old friend. Charles Broughton and I had been chums since childhood, had blacked one another's eyes in the playing fields at Eton, had lived on the same landing at Brazenose, and shared the same chambers in the Temple. His father's death had, when a comparatively young man, placed him in the receipt of a handsome income, and the possession of a fine estate, whilst I was still slaving at the Bar in the same old chambers. However, we generally managed to meet once a year, and on this occasion I was his guest at Oakshote Manor, a grand old Elizabethan house in the picturesque county of Kent. With the exception of myself, our party was entirely a family one, and consisted of Broughton, his wife, and four children; the eldest of whom, Harry, now at Eton, was a grand specimen of the English public school-boy, equally good at cricket or Cicero, bringing down his rocketer, or translating a chorus from the "Frogs." The other three children, little Charley, Maud and Ethel, were still in the nursery, the last member of our little party was Broughton's father-in-law, old General Lennox, a grand old warrior who had seen hard fighting, and received hard knocks, during many years campaigning, in every quarter of the globe. One evening, Broughton, the General, and I sat rather longer over our '34 port and walnuts than usual. Master Harry, however, having drunk his authorised glass and a half of port, having entirely demolished a dish of almonds and rasins (ah, for the digestion of youth!), and caring but little for the claims of lodgers to a share in the suffrage, which question we were vigorously discussing, had retired to the drawing-room, where we, ere long followed. There we found the lights out, and Mrs. Broughton, by the fitful light of the big wood fire, telling the children the oft told story of the Black Squire, Roger de Broughton, who had murdered his youngest brother through jealousy, and whose ghost still haunted the west wing of the old house. Charley, Ethel and Maud were still experiencing that delicious thrill of excitement, which is the unfailing result of a well-told ghost story. But incredulous, Harry rudely exclaims,

"Ghosts are all my eye. I wish I could just catch one fooling round my quarters; I fancy I'd make it raythor hot for him.

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Ghosts, goblins, wraiths and gentlemen of that persuasion are only fit for old women and kids, ain't they, grand-daddy? You don't believe in any such creatures do you."

The old soldier gave a queer little sigh and said,

"Supposing I do believe in them to a certain extent, would you think very *very* badly of your old grand-dad?" Whether it was the strange and unusual melancholy of his voice, or what it was I know not, but our attention was instantly arrested, and Mrs. Broughton, looking anxiously at her dear father, and seeing an unusually grave expression on his venerable face, said.

"Father, you look quite sad."

"No, my dear," he replied, "I am not sad; I'm far too happy here with you all to feel sad; but Harry's question raised in my mind a memory which, though not forgotten, had long lain dormant, and which," he continued, turning to me, "if you don't mind an old soldier's garrulity, you shall hear as soon as the chicks are packed off to bed, as late hours are bad for little people and I don't think my story would interest them very much."

The three children, having vainly begged to hear grandpapa's story, and having been duly kissed, said good-night and went to bed very inconsolable indeed. And the General, seating himself in an arm-chair, with his daughter's head resting on his knee, as she sat on a footstool beside him, and gazing very intently into the flickering embers, quietly began—

"It was during the summer of 185—, that the 113th Light Infantry, which I then had the honour to command, was quartered at Mhow, in Central India. We had experienced very heavy rains during the wet season, and now that the rains had at last stopped, the heat was unusually severe. And so, what with the rains, accompanied by damp, followed immediately by the burning heat, and the fact that the regiment had been but eighteen months in the country, the fever and ague were very rife; the hospitals were full of poor fellows struck down by these unwelcome visitors, and the doctors were hard at it all day long, and, for the matter of that, often enough, all night too. On the 25th of August of that year, God knows I remember the day full well, the regiment had got up a small Gymkhana race meeting, and capital fun it was. At mess, as it was guest night, we kept things up rather late, as you may suppose — the men who had won celebrating their victories, the men who had lost drowning their cares in the bottle. At last, when it was past midnight, and my joyous subs. were beginning to play pranks, which I thought it perhaps better a colonel should not see, I rose, left the ante-room, and went across to my bungalow, which was situated some short distance away. As I came in I was delighted to see, lying on my table, a letter from England, directed in my daughter's loved handwriting."

[Here the old General gently clasped his daughter's hand, and *resumed.*]

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"She was then under the wing of Miss Jay, 13, Upper Duke Street, Tunbridge Wells, who for the ridiculously small sum of a hundred guineas per annum, extras not included (the use of the cruet being, I recollect, among the latter), afforded an education worthy, I thought, for the daughter of a simple soldier. Mails were not so regular then as they are now, and a letter from my child was, indeed, a treat. So, seating myself in a comfortable cane chair, and lighting a cheroot, I opened the letter, and as the only sound to be heard was the regular and ceaseless step of the sentry, as he walked to and fro just outside my compound railings. I was soon absorbed in the news of her, whom, dear Harry, I loved then, as I love now, as being since her mother's death, the one sole object for whom I had to work and live.

"One page after another was read. All the little incidents which make up a school-girl's life; her last new bonnet, her visit to her aunt at Kensington, Miss Jay's heartless cruelty in not letting her correspond with a certain Charlie Broughton, whom she had met at a dance at the house of the afore-mentioned aunt, were all duly discussed, and just as I was entering into the last page of closely-written manuscript, I heard a knock at the door of my bungalow, which, as it was an exceedingly close evening, I had left ajar.

"'Come in,' I shouted, and to my surprise there tottered in a man dressed as a private of my own regiment. His stalwart frame was utterly wrecked by recent illness, his eye looked vacant and wandering, his cheeks and chin were covered with a five days' beard, and it was with an obvious effort he drew himself up to 'attention,' as he stood in the middle of the room close to my writing-table.

"'Who are you, and what do you want at this hour of the night?' said I, for I must tell you, though a just and fair man, I hope, I had the reputation of being one of the keenest martinets in Her Majesty's service; and it was indeed a new experience for a colonel to have his privacy intruded upon at midnight by a mere private. 'Who are you? and what do you want?'

"The man looked at me for a moment, and then quietly said, in a strong Somersetshire accent:

"'My name, zür, is Benson; I'm a private in C company, Captain Vandeloor's, an' I waänt you to grant me furlough to return to England. I'm struck with this yere fever, and I waänt to get yöme afore I die.'

"I looked up at the man, and indeed he seemed to be nearer his long home than any other. I said:

"'You have been out here too short a time to make me think for a moment of granting you furlough; we want all our men at present; besides,' I continued, 'I can see you are very ill, so go straight to the hospital and see the doctor.'

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"'Zür,' said the man, 'I feel I am a dead maän,' and his voice sounded strangely deep and sepulchral, 'and, as I caan't get yöme, will you kindly graänt a favour to a wretched man on the verge of the grave.'

"To this day, I know not why, but some strange impulse seemed to drive me on, almost against my own reason, and I could not help but say,

"'Yes, my man, I will.'

"He thanked me with genuine gratitude, and with trembling hands undid the third and fourth buttons of his patrol jacket, and from thence drew out a faded and battered photograph, and a small scrap of crumpled paper, which he placed on the corner of my table; then diving his hands into his left-hand trouser pocket he drew out some money, which appeared to me to be partly Indian and partly English; the last coin, however, he extracted from his other pocket, it was a bent three-penny piece, he looked at it for a moment with a lingering glance, and then with a sigh placed it with the rest.

"'Zür,' said he, 'on thaät peäce of paper,' pointing to the crumpled scrawl he had placed on the table, you will find the address of my poor mother, God help her, the naäm's different to mine, but let that pass. I was a baäd zön, and should like you to zend her my little zavings, such as they are, and this 'ere portrait, and to zay I was zorry for what I 'a done, and that if I 'adn't been nipped by this yere fever, I'd 'ave struv to maäke amends for the past. So help me God.'

"His brow was damp with sweat, his whole frame shook with emotion, and there was a yearning in his voice perfectly indescribable.

"'Private Benson,' said I, 'it shall be done.'

"With a look of intense gratitude, such as you sometimes see in a dog, and, alas! but seldom in a man, he with difficulty drew himself up, thanked me, saluted and passed out.

"As I watched his tottering frame go through the open door, I heard the sharp ping of my travelling clock, the companion of many years' campaigning in various climes, and on looking at it I saw it had just struck *half-past one.*

"I pondered for some time over the strange circumstance, and especially over my folly and weakness in undertaking a commission of so serious a nature for a man who might be, for aught I knew, an unmitigated scoundrel. However, feeling sleepy, I resumed my letter, finished it, turned in and was soon fast asleep.

"The next morning, needless to say, the first thing that came into my head was Private Benson's legacy. With a strange doubt, as to whether it was not all a dream, the result of the previous evening's unwonted festivites, I got out of bed, entered my sitting-room, and went straight to my table; but there sure enough was the portrait, the money, and the scrap of paper, which articles I now

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examined. The photograph was that of a hale young fellow, dressed in countrified-looking clothes, bearing an unmistakable likeness to Benson himself; by his side was a pretty country lassie clad in her Sunday gown, evidently his sweetheart. The photograph looked three or four years old, though, of course, from its wear and tear, it was rather hard to judge from appearance (besides photography was then quite in its infancy, very different to what it is now); the photographer's name on the card was Johnson, Frome, Somersetshire: and on the back was scrawled the words '*For Nelly.*'

"The piece of paper bore the following address, written in the same hand as had written the words on the back of the photograph. 'Mrs. Shiel, Westcombe Village, Everton, Somersetshire.' The money amounted to about £2 17s. including the bent threepenny piece. While I was counting up the little pile, it suddenly flashed through my brain that Private Benson must have somehow evaded the sentry. There was but one entrance to my compound and the sentry's box was quite close to the very wicket gate. So the sentry must have either gone to sleep, or been extremely careless. Well, thought I, this will never do, and as several robberies by the natives of a serious character had lately occurred in some of the officers' quarters I determined to make an example of this man.

On going down to my work in the orderly room I told Walcourt, the adjutant, to enquire who was on sentry duty outside my bungalow at half-past one that morning, and to clap him promptly under arrest.

"Having finished my orderly-room work, which happened to be that morning but trifling, I went into the ante-room. At that moment there happened to be only two men there—my dear old friend and companion in arms, Beresford, the senior major, and a young Scotch surgeon, named Macalister; he had but lately joined us, but had already shown much skill and self-devotion among the fever-stricken wretches in hospital. They were drinking their morning 'pegs,' and smoking. After some few minutes' chat, in came Walcourt.

"'Colonel,' says he, 'Private Jones, who was sentry at the time you mentioned, denies ever having seen a soul, and is loud in the protestations of his innocence.'

"'Well,' said I, 'Private Jones will find to his cost, when he is tried by court-martial, that of all offences a lie is the worst; for as sure as my name is George Lennox, I will swear that at half-past one this very morning, Private Benson, of Vandeleur's company, came into my bungalow, right past the sentry-box, and spoke to me for more than five minutes.'

"Suddenly we heard a crash, as a tumbler fell on the floor and was shattered into pieces, and Macalister, white as a sheet, exclaimed, "My God, sir! it's impossible; poor Benson *died of fever in my arms this morning, at the very hour you mention;*

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and as the poor fellow passed away I heard the hospital clock chime the half-hour, and you can see his corpse in the dead house, if it hasn't yet been buried.'

"Beresford looked at me with a twinkle in his eye, and muttered something about the evils of excess, consequent excitement, etc.

"Horrified, and with a strange feeling of awe, I said,

"'For heaven's sake, Beresford, don't joke. I'm in right earnest. Come at once to my bungalow, gentlemen, and I trust to your honour not to reveal the extraordinary tale I am about to tell you.

"They followed me to my house, where I told them the story just as I have told it to you, and showed them the money, the address, and the photograph, in which Macalister immediately recognised the likeness to his late patient.

"Beresford apologised most humbly for his ill-timed jesting, and, having promised to mention it to no one, they went away.

"That very day, I wrote to the poor boy's mother, enclosing a cheque for the money on my London banker, the photograph, and also the three-penny piece, which I thought must have some value outside its commercial equivalent. I told her briefly, of her son's death and his penitence for the past, and that he would have endeavoured to have made amends for his sin, if God had thought fit to spare him.

"I addressed the letter as Private Benson had desired, and felt conscious I was doing my duty.

"Some days after, Walcourt came into my bungalow, and said: 'Do you know, colonel, I've found out something about that poor young fellow, Benson, and why, though *his* name seemingly was Benson, his mother's name was Shiel. I asked Vandeleur if he knew much about him. Vandeleur said he joined just before we embarked, that he was a quiet, reserved fellow, a very smart, good soldier, always ready to do a good turn for a comrade in the way of duty, though he seemed to associate with none of them, with the exception of a married private of the name of Johnson. I happened to drop on Johnson this morning, and, feeling interested in your story, asked him if he knew anything about Private Benson. "Well," said Johnson (for I had better tell it in his own words) "I didn't know very much of him, though I was, so to speak, the only real friend he had in the regiment. He was a solitary chap, like, and kept hisself to hisself, though very generous regarding sentry duty and the like. He was partickler kind to my little girl, when she was took bad with croup, last spring, and used to make 'er toys out of bits o' cane, for he was remarkable clever with 'is 'ands; and so being fond of my child, I naturally took to 'im. He hevidently 'ad a past, as many a man in the ranks 'as, but as 'e never wolunteered to speak about it, I never questioned 'im; 'owever, sir, one day, just as that cussed fever wos a-coming over him, I seed him a-sitting down, looking very down-

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cast. Well, I goes up, and I hasks 'im wots hup. 'Johnson,' said he, 'I'm right bad, and shall never see my home no more.' And when I hasks him where that home might be, the poor chap busts out a crying like a babby, and then, sir, he opens 'is 'eart and tells me 'is 'ole history, which, though short, is huncommon sad." Here' said Walcourt, 'honest Johnson gave a palpable snuffle and crammed the knuckles of his horny hand into his streaming eyes. "He was the son of a widowed mother in a village in Somersetshire. She was entirely dependent on 'im, and what with working on their little farm and odd jobs in the carpentering way (that's where he learnt to make they toys so handy), he managed to keep things going. He was also engaged to a nice girl, the daughter of the postmistress in the village. Well, all went well till one cursed day there came to that little village of Westcombe, a company of strolling players. Among them was a woman as 'ad seen better days. She 'ad been beautiful, but who I suppose 'ad led a baddish life, and 'aving come down a bit in the world 'ad to earn her bread anyways, but worse luck she was an uncommon clever woman, and seeing this poor young chap, she sets her cap at 'im, and gets regular round 'im. They stayed but three days there and on the evening of the third day poor Shiel, for that was his right name, 'aving fallen 'eels over nob in love with this vixen, collars all his little savin's, and bolts away with her to Weston-super-Mare, vich, I believe, is the swell watering place of them parts. Werry soon the cash was spent, and my lady, seeing the game's up, cuts again with a lawyer's clerk, and leaves poor Shiel in the lurch. Being ashamed of what 'e 'ad done, dreading to meet 'is pore old mother whom 'e 'ad so wronged, and 'is sweetheart whom 'e 'ad forsaken, he walked 'is way to Portsmouth, where we were just hembarking and not knowing what to do, or where to 'ide 'is 'ead, 'e listed hunder the name of Benson, and now he's gone. I went, on the quiet, to see 'im in the 'ospital; 'e was delirious, but seemed to be calling for his mother and Nelly, which I take to be 'is sweetheart. And so, sir, I can't 'elp thinkin' 'e wos a brookin' of the wrong he 'ad done 'em up to the werry last. And that's all *I* know about him." And, of course,' said Walcourt, 'that's all I can tell you, colonel, but there must have been some good in the chap to have stuck to his sweetheart's picture all these years.'

"Well, dear friends, some months had elapsed, and I had begun to almost forget the whole thing, when coming one day from Parade I was handed a letter. It was enclosed in a miserable little envelope and directed in a feeble straggling hand; but on looking at the post-mark I saw that of 'Everton.' In a moment the whole story flashed across my mind, and on tearing open the letter I saw it signed 'Martha Shiel.'

"It was only a few lines, written in a shaky, and almost illegible hand-writing, in which she thanked me for my condescen-

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sion and kindness in sending her the portrait and money; but that she especially thanked God for having brought her poor erring boy to true repentance, and that He in His mercy had sent her a daughter (evidently poor Nelly) to take the place of her dead child.

"That was all. But truly as I gazed upon that ill-written, ill-spelt scrawl, blurred here and there, where the scalding tears had fallen unheeded upon it, I could not help thinking how far more pathetic in their sincerity were these poor simple words than the most voluble protestations of gratitude and forgiveness; and I felt glad the poor lad's sin was forgiven upon earth, as doubtless it was in heaven.

"And so," said the General, "there ends my story—the truth of which Walcourt and Macalister will vouch for, for poor Ned Beresford has lain many a long day under the walls of Lucknow.

"And Harry, dear boy, you have heard my story, which I never attempt to explain, considering it far beyond mortal ken; but when you hear good, wise, and maybe brave men and women believing in the supernatural, don't dub them straightaway fools and cowards, remembering that 'there may be more things in Heaven and Earth that are dream't of in your philosophy?'"

J. RANDAL.

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TWO CRIMINALS.

In the year 1840 the French town of Tulle was the scene of great excitement. A young wife had been accused of the murder of her husband, a rich ironmaster of the neighbourhood; and there were minor charges against her. It was alleged that she had stolen diamonds to the value of £300 or so, the property of her friend, Madame de Léautard. For these crimes, Marie Laffarge was to be tried before the assize court of the department of Corrèze.

The union of Madlle. Marie Capelle and M. Laffarge had been somewhat sudden. She was the granddaughter of Ermine, the adopted child, some said the child otherwise than by adoption, of Madame de Genlis. A girl of romantic disposition, Madlle. Capelle had bestowed her affections upon the Comte Charpentier, a young nobleman, with whom she had been in some degree acquainted from her earliest years. In his turn the Comte had been attracted by the grace, the beauty, and the intelligence of Madlle. Capelle. The Comte, indeed, bore himself so much like a lover and a suitor that the lady's friends interfered, to require of him an account of his conduct and his intentions in the matter. But the Comte was one of those lovers who love and ride away. He had to admit that he was not seeking Marie Capelle's hand in marriage. It was insisted that his visits to the house of the Capelles, that his attentions to Madlle. Marie, should cease forthwith. He was forbidden to see her more.

It may be that Marie Capelle's love for the Comte was earnest and sincere enough. She appeared to take deeply to heart his perfidy. She was greatly mortified; her health and spirits were much affected; it was agreed that altogether she had become an altered person. Her friends were urgent that she should marry: a husband's fondness would surely induce forgetfulness of the lover's falsehood. It was said, indeed, that a candidate for the hand of Marie Capelle was forthcoming at last, as the result of an advertisement in the newspapers. M. Laffarge presented himself, a young man of twenty-eight, a rich *maître de forges* in the department of Corrèze, rude of aspect and manner, and of provincial accent and habits, of inferior intelligence and imperfect education. Marie Capelle possessed no fortune or very little; still, it was admitted that M. Laffarge was hardly a suitable or an eligible husband for her. But the lady's family were predetermined to be content with M. Laffarge's offer; they were eager to be

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relieved of responsibility in regard to her; her establishment in life was most desirable. She had evinced, it was said, certain peculiarities of disposition. On more than one occasion her honesty had been suspected. It was believed that she had been guilty of sundry petty thefts. After but a few days' acquaintance with him, Marie Capelle consented to become the wife of M. Laffarge.

The bride was conveyed to her husband's house, in the Limousin, and there took up her abode. Le Glandier, as it was called, was a gloomy place enough, situated in a wild and desolate part of the country; it owned none of the comforts and refinements of life to which the young Parisian had been accustomed. The gloom and dreariness about her at first chilled and depressed her greatly; her despondency when she contemplated her new home was extreme. But she seemed with an effort to overcome these early feelings and impressions, and gradually to conform herself to the provincial method of life which lay before her, and which, indeed, was hardly to be altered or avoided. She was gratified, it was alleged, at the effect her presence, with the new Parisian fashions, had created in the country. The while over her husband she had obtained very complete ascendency. In pledge of their mutual affection they had made reciprocal wills in each other's favour. This arrangement had been carried out at her suggestion.

The arrest and imprisonment of Madame Laffarge may be said to have occasioned an excitement which spread throughout France, and even affected the entire continent. The accusations against the young wife were taken in order of their date, and she was tried first for the minor offence. On the 10th July, 1840, she was brought before the tribunal at Brives-la-Gaillarde, charged with stealing the diamonds of her friend, Madame de Léautard. There had been an application for the postponement of the trial, and the four judges were said to be divided upon the subject After some deliberation, however, the demand for delay was rejected: it was ordered that the trial should proceed forthwith.

Madame Laffarge could offer little defence to the charge brought against her. She was content with protesting her innocence, and with assailing the reputation of Madame de Léautard. She alleged that the diamonds had been given her by Madame Léautard, to purchase the silence of a certain M. Clavet, who had been her lover before her marriage with M. Léautard. The accused was convicted upon irrefragable testimony, and sentenced to undergo a term of imprisonment for two years. She had yet to be tried for the murder of her husband.

Her appearance was described as that of a "mild, inoffensive girl of nineteen," but she was in truth some years older. Her manner was extremely attractive; she was credited with singular power of fascination. The portraits of her that were displayed in the shop windows completely failed to do her justice. She was pale, with

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the prominent ophidian forehead of the great French actress, Rachel; her eyes were black and deep-sunken. She was an admirable singer, and the tone of her voice was so sympathetically musical, that the advocate who prosecuted on behalf of Madame Léautard, was constrained, it was said, to close his ears lest he should be unduly influenced by the touching accents of the prisoner. An eye-witness of the trial, an intimate friend of the family, long acquainted with the prisoner, wrote of her: "Marie Capelle est une personne très séduisante, d'une douceur, d'une obligeance sans égale; pleine de facilité, apprenant tout et faisant tout bien; adroitement ambitieuse et toujours aimable. Il parait que tous ceux qui l'ont connu ont été plus ou moins amoureux d'elle: on n'a jamais été mieux coquette, etc."

The trial proceeded; the court was crowded to excess. On one side stood the Laffarge family, dissolved in tears, the mother and sister of the deceased; on the other were ranged the relations and friends of the accused. The judges, in long black robes, occupied the bench; many advocates were assembled below. At the bidding of the president a door was opened at the end of the hall and the prisoner appeared in the custody of four gendarmes; she advanced with a firm step and took her seat at the bar of the tribunal, with a gendarme on either side of her. She was clothed in deep black; her face was covered with a veil, which she raised presently upon the direction of the president. She surveyed the court with perfect calmness; she was very pale and her lips were compressed: "jamais il n'y eut au monde pareil sang-froid."

The facts of the case were duly proved. It appeared that six months after her marriage, during the brief absence of her husband upon business, she had written to him, sending him, as a remembrance, a cake made by herself; she begged him to eat it at an appointed hour, when she would eat a similar cake in proof of the perfect sympathy that existed between them. M. Laffarge eats the cake and is taken very ill. Partially recovered, he slowly journeys home. The unfavourable symptoms reappear; he retires to his bed. After four weeks of extreme suffering, he dies. Throughout he had been waited upon by his wife; everything he had swallowed had been administered by her hand. Suspicion is roused. Arsenic is found in the possession of Madame Laffarge. And traces of the poison are discovered in the vessels which had contained the food and medicines of the deceased.

The trial commenced on the 3rd September, 1840, and lasted seventeen days. On the fourth day it was held that the evidence had turned rather in favour of the accused. The chemists appointed to examine the remains of the deceased reported that they had been unable to discover any traces of poison. There were complaints of "horrible scenes of indecency and frivolity" in the course of the trial. One of the witnesses, by the eccentricity of his aspect and manner, and the comicality of his replies,

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had convulsed the court with laughter; even the prisoner had joined in the merriment. Meantime the dreadful process of analysis was being conducted in the yard adjoining the court. The *débris infectés* of the unfortunate M. Laffarge were brought into court and submitted to the notice of the jury and the prisoner. She glanced towards her advocate, M. Paillet, and said, firmly and disdainfully, "Dites que je reconnais tout"; then she turned away, "et mis son mouchoir sous son nez." There was a great demand in court for smelling bottles; they were bought by hundreds. The fumes arising from the chemical analysis were overpowering. The newspapers dwelt much upon the subject of "l'oudre étide du cadavre bouillant." On the 15th September it was known that the great chemist, Orfila, and two of his colleagues, had arrived from Paris, and were making a further examination of the remains of M. Laffarge. Presently there was a profound sensation in court, when M. Orfila appeared as a witness. He announced, while the spectators listened with breathless anxiety, that he had found arsenic in the stomach of the deceased. The prisoner was seized with convulsions. On the following day the trial was suspended, the prisoner's physicians testifying that she was unable to appear in court. M. Paillet, her counsel, protested that he had come to defend her, but that he feared that he must now remain to bury her. On the 17th Madame Laffarge reappeared in court; she was conveyed to the bar in an arm-chair, and seemed scarcely alive, she was so pale and weak. M. Paillet spoke throughout the day on her behalf, and produced several letters she had written during the six months following her marriage, to prove that she had reasoned herself into content and had always expressed herself pleased with the devotion of her husband. On the 21st the jury delivered their verdict. The prisoner was found guilty with "extenuating circumstances." She was sentenced to hard labour for life and exposure in the pillory at Tulle.

Her appeal to the Court of Cassation was rejected. A second trial was granted, however, in regard to the charge of theft. On the 30th July, 1841, Madame Laffarge reappeared in court to be tried again for the robbery of Madame Léautard's diamonds. The trial lasted two days, but there was practically no defence. The prisoner pretended to allow judgment to go by default because the court would not allow of further delay in order that she might bring over an important witness, M. Clavet, from Mexico. The minor term of imprisonment to which she was liable for her theft was, of course, absorbed in the life-punishment to which she had been sentenced for the murder of her husband.

One of the published letters of Rachel, the great French actress, affords a later glimpse of Madame Laffarge. The letter was written in the year 1848. "I went yesterday to visit Madame Laffarge in her prison, La Maison Centrale. It was necessary to

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obtain permission of the Préfet. . . . As this celebrated recluse does not willingly receive those who wish to see her it was necessary to have her authorisation, too. . . . She answered graciously that she should be enchanted to see me, because I was one of the women who, etc., etc. . . . I was struck, not with her beauty, for the poor woman—poor woman, I say, guilty or not guilty—is dying slowly by that most frightful of all diseases, disease of the lungs. She feels the skein of her life winding off, and to the very end she will feel it—it is dreadful. Better a ball in that feeble chest or a chimney on her head. . . . I could see that she eyed me with all her understanding and a little surprise. The fact is that emotion gave me one of my few and tiny lumps in the throat. . . . I entreated her to believe that it was not idle curiosity which had led me to visit her, and she interrupted me with much good taste to say that she could not suppose such a thing. . . . 'I only saw you once,' she said, 'It was in "Iphigénie en Aulide." I have often regretted that I did not know you thoroughly.' Then I offered to recite for her whatever she liked, the dream of 'Athalie,' the avowal of 'Phèdre,' or both, if it would give her any pleasure. She exclaimed in reply, 'Ah, it would be too beautiful; I dare not: you would make me regret the world too much; and I have ordered my thoughts so as not to regret life!' After sundry other sympathetic expressions on either side, with compliments on my youth and face—compliments which, alas! I could not return her—we parted, she choosing to embrace me. Now, if you wish for my opinion of this famous prisoner, I will tell you that she seems to me a very remarkable woman, very elegant in her conversation, complacently hearing herself talk very well, and that in a society where women counted for something, she would have held one of the first places, not so much because of her opinions perhaps as in right of her manner of expressing them. . . . Much moved, I left her, and I said to myself that if ever I had a pardon to ask of a sovereign it would be the pardon of that poor penitent woman, married by advertisement, and surely about to die either of her own remorse or by reason of the injustice of man."

Madame Laffarge did not long survive. For some time before her death the severity of her sentence had been mitigated, because of her infirm state of health; she had been transferred from prison to a *maison de santé*. Public interest in her was maintained by the publication of her Memoirs. Soon after the trial the story of the murder of M. Laffarge formed the subject of an exciting melodrama. A version of this work was even produced at the Surrey Theatre and received with applause. In the first volume of *Punch* may be read a severe censure of this Surrey drama, and of the execrable task which had prompted its representation.

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In 1846, Lord Lytton, then Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, published his novel of *Lucretia*. The leading incidents in this story were avowedly founded upon facts; the crimes set forth in *Lucretia* "took place," wrote the author, in the first preface, "within the last seventeen years. There has been no exaggeration as to their extent, no great departure from their details. . . . nor have I much altered the social position of the criminals nor in the least overrated their attainments and intelligence. In those more salient essentials which will most, perhaps, provoke the reader's incredulous wonder I narrate a history not invent a fiction." It has been assumed that Lord Lytton's criminals, "Gabriel Varney" and "Lucretia Clavering," were portraits of the forger, Wainewright, known as an essayist and critic under his assumed name of Janus Weathercock, and of his wife, Frances Ward. In his collected edition of Wainewright's writings Mr. Carew Hazlitt expressly states, "Mrs. Wainewright, in fact, sat to the novelist for the portrait of 'Lucretia Clavering' and Wainewright is 'Varney.'" Mr. Hazlitt is only in part correct, however. Without doubt, Wainewright is "Varney"; but Mrs. Wainewright is assuredly not "Lucretia." Indeed, a note which Lord Lytton added to his preface and which Mr. Hazlitt appears to have overlooked, is clear upon this point. The novelist admits that his criminals were not in actual life as in the novel, intimates and accomplices. "Their crimes were of similar character, effected by similar agencies and committed at dates which embrace their several careers of guilt within the same period: but I have no authority to suppose that the one was known to the other." The alleged murder by Wainewright of Helen Jane Phœbe Abercromby occurred in 1830; M. Laffarge was murdered in 1840; both events lie within the period of seventeen years mentioned by the novelist. It has been reasonably assumed that in great part the character of *Lucretia* was derived from the case of Madame Laffarge.

The story of Thomas Griffith Wainewright has been often related. The "Varney" of Lord Lytton's *Lucretia*, Wainewright figured also as the hero of the short tale of *Hunted Down*, written by Charles Dickens for the *New York Ledger*. The criminal may be said to have exercised a peculiar fascination over many minds, because of his literary attainments and position, the dreadful crimes of which he was suspected, the cunning with which these had been accomplished, and because, as De Quincey states, "of the contrast which existed between the murderer's dandy appearance and the terrific purposes with which he was always dallying." Wainewright was a contributor to the *London Magazine*, of which Messrs. Taylor and Hessey were the publishers. It was at a dinner-party, given by these gentlemen, that De Quincey for the first and last time met Wainewright; the other guests being Thomas Hood, Charles Lamb, Hamilton Reynolds and Allan Cunningham. De Quincey had been interested in the papers which

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Wainewright, now signing himself, "Janus Weathercock," now "Cornelius Van Vinkboom," and sometimes, it appears, "Egomet Bonmot," had contributed to the magazine. These contributions were avowedly written by a trifler, but "in a spirit of coxcombry that did not so much disgust as amuse." The writer could not conceal "the ostentatious pleasure which he took in the luxurious fitting-up of his rooms in the fancied splendour of his *bijouterie*, etc." It was easy, however, as De Quincey held, for a man of any experience to read two facts in all this idle *étalage:* one being that his finery was but of a second-rate order; the other that he was a *parvenu*, not at home even among his second-rate splendour. For, though Wainewright was writing under assumed names, and affecting fictitious characters, it seemed clear that he was only in this way making more complete revelation of his own personality, his peculiar tastes, foibles and fancies. De Quincey had been much impressed, however, with Wainewright's papers upon art, in that, throughout his judgments upon the great Italian masters of painting, there seemed a tone of sincerity and of native sensibility, as of one who spoke for himself, and was not merely a copyer from books. His literary manner overflowed with levity and impertinence, but the substance of his judgment was of interest and value in cases, where, De Quincey writes, "I happened to have had an opportunity of judging for myself." "Here also," he continues, "arose a claim upon Lamb's attention; for Lamb and his sister having no sensibility for music, had the deepest for painting." Accordingly, Lamb is described as paying Wainewright a great deal of attention, and continuing to speak of him for years with an interest wholly disproportioned to his pretensions. Otherwise "his appearance would rather have repelled Lamb; it was commonplace, and more suited to express the dandyism which overspread the surface of his manner than the unaffected sensibility which apparently lay in his nature." In Wainewright, De Quincey confessed himself interested in some degree "on a day when I hated the face of man and woman." "Yet," as he writes, "if I had known the man for the murderer even then that he was, what sudden loss of interest, what sudden growth of another interest, would have changed the face of the scene! Trivial creature, that didst carry thy dreadful eye, kindling with perpetual treasons! Dreadful creature, that didst carry thy trivial eye, sparkling with eternal levity over the sleeping surfaces of confiding household life: oh! what a revolution for man would'st thou have founded, had thy deep wickedness prospered!"

De Quincey, writing in 1848, of a past period, states the case with some inaccuracy. He charges Wainewright with the murder of "two beautiful young ladies, visitors in his family, and nearly related to his wife." The two half-sisters of Frances, the wife of Wainewright, were Helen Frances Phœbe and Madeline Abercromby. Madeline was married in 1832, and survived until 1839, when she

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died of scarlet-fever, leaving three children. The "poor lady," writes Mr. Carew Hazlitt, "was to the last reluctant to believe in Wainewright's guilt in her sister's case." For that Helen owed her death to the hand of her brother-in-law can scarcely be questioned. From De Quincey's account it may be gathered, however, that, as he judged, Mrs. Wainewright had no share in the crime. "In the middle of the day which Mr. Wainewright had fixed for their murder, he framed a pretence for drawing his wife out of doors upon a very long walk. His fear was that *she* might have penetration enough to notice and report the agonizing spasms caused by the poison, whereas two young servant girls, totally inexperienced, were easily persuaded it was a case of cholera. On returning, after a three hours' walk, Mr. and Mrs. W. found the two young ladies dead." There was, of course, but one young lady, and the cause of death was generally supposed to be, not cholera, but "mischief in the brain," as Dr. Locock, the physician in attendance, described it. The death of Helen Abercromby occurred on the 21st December, 1830. "The husband and wife separated in 1831 to meet no more." Mrs. Wainewright and her surviving half-sister took lodgings in Pimlico and there abode until the marriage of Madeline, in 1832.

Mr. Carew Hazlitt, always viewing Mrs. Wainewright as the original of "Lucretia," states, that in the case of the death of Helen Abercromby, "the monster owned that his wife and himself were accomplices, and held consultations, during the progress of the deadly drug in its hideous work, as to the fitness of administering, or not administering more. What we do not quite know, is whether, as in the novel, the lady faltered when she fully discovered the gravity of the issue, or when something like conscience smote her, and, whether Wainewright really exhibited the unflinching sternness and brutality of 'Varney.'" Even supposing what may be gravely questioned, that Wainewright really made such an avowal as Mr. Hazlitt credits him with, there is little reason for believing it to be true. Wainewright was scarcely capable of speaking the truth; and about him and his story much fiction has gathered.

Wainewright was never brought to justice for the murders of which he was accused. It was only in the case of Helen Abercromby that there occurred anything like public revelation of his guilt. Miss Abercromby's life had been insured, in various offices, for a period of two or three years only, but to the amount of some £18,000. At her death, the offices combined to refuse payment of the policies upon the ground of fraud and misrepresentation; it was pleaded that the policies, under virtue of the Act 13, Geo. III., c. 48, were invalid as "wagering policies," because no one could insure another's life without having an interest of value therein. As the executor of Miss Abercromby's will, Wainewright brought actions against the offices. It was not until 1835, that

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the case came into court, and the "test action," Wainewright *versus* certain Directors of the Imperial Insurance Company, was tried at Westminster, before Lord Abinger, and a special jury, who were unable, however, to agree upon a verdict. There was a second trial some few months' later, when the jury returned a verdict for the defendants, and Wainewright's hopes of enforcing payments of the policies were dissolved. It was more than hinted, on the part of the defendants, that Miss Abercromby had been poisoned, and by Wainewright. Lord Abinger described the case as "pregnant with suspicion;" but he declined to pursue the investigation. He was trying a civil action; he was not presiding over a criminal court. "It was unnecessary," he said, "to consider for a moment whether murder had been committed, supposing that question had been raised, because *that* would not prevent the executors from recovering, provided that the insurance had been effected *bonâ fide* on Miss Abercromby's behalf." It may be added, that had Wainewright been brought to trial for murder, he would, probably, have been acquitted. The operation of strychnine—and it is now believed that Miss Abercromby was poisoned by means of strychnine—was but imperfectly understood fifty years ago. Moreover, Dr. Locock—to be afterwards famous as the Queen's physician—persisted in according the death to "mischief in the brain." He had proposed to examine the brain, and to this Wainewright immediately assented. The doctor found what he believed was a quite sufficient cause of death—a considerable quantity of water on the lower part of the brain, pressing upon the upper part of the spinal marrow, etc. The stomach and its contents were also examined, but were reported to present "no appearance of anything sufficient to account for death." Dr. Locock afterwards admitted, in private conversation, as Forster relates in his *Life of Dickens*, that the opinion he had formed of Miss Abercromby's chances of recovery "were first shaken by the gloomy and despairing cries of the old family nurse that her mother and her uncle had died exactly so." At the trial, during her cross-examination, Sarah Handcock, the nurse in question, stated that Wainewright's uncle, George Edward Griffiths, died in 1829, and Mrs. Abercromby in the following year. Wainewright was present during the brief illness and death of his uncle, and Mrs. Abercromby died while on a visit at Wainewright's house, at Turnham Green. It has been conjectured, but of course absolute evidence on the subject was not forthcoming, that both deaths were the result of poison administered by Wainewright. By the death of his uncle, Wainewright profited considerably, but it is not clear that he obtained any pecuniary advantage from the death of Mrs. Abercromby. Suspicion has also laid to Wainewright's charge the death of a certain gentleman from Norfolk, for some time resident in Caroline Place, Bloomsbury, and afterwards of Boulogne, whose life had been insured in the Pelican office for a sum of £3,000;

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but the case has never been precisely stated, and remains in a clouded condition. Apparently, Wainewright gained nothing by the murder, if it was a murder. He was supposed, however, to be quite capable of poisoning in jest. He wore, it is said, a ring—the original of the poisoned ring in *Lucretia*—which contained strychnine, "crystals of the Indian *nux vomica*, a poison, almost tasteless, difficult of discovery, and capable of a most infinite dilution." It is curious that he never poisoned himself, the whole story of his life being considered.

Wainewright's pecuniary embarrassments drove him across the channel soon after the death of Miss Abercromby. He was absent some years. In 1836, he suffered six months' imprisonment in Paris, as a suspected person, having poison in his possession. In 1837, he returned to England to be arrested upon a charge of forgery, committed on the Bank of England in 1824. Brought to trial, he pleaded guilty to the minor counts in the indictment, and was sentenced to transportation for life. Forgery was, at this time, a capital offence, but it was stated that the Bank "did not desire to shed blood," and the heavier charges were withdrawn. Entitled to the interest arising from a sum of about £5,000 New Four Per Cents, Wainewright had forged the names of four trustees appearing in the Bank books as the holders of the stock, and obtained absolute possession of the amount. Wainewright is said to have died of apoplexy in Hobart Town Hospital, about the year 1852.

It was during Wainewright's confinement in Newgate that an odd chance brought Charles Dickens, in company with Macready, John Forster and Hablot Browne, to the prison. "My God! that is Wainewright," cried Macready. The criminal was described by Forster, as a "shabby-genteel creature, with sandy, disordered hair and dirty moustache, who had turned quickly round, with a defiant stare at our entrance, looking at once mean and fierce, and quite capable of the cowardly murders he had committed." No doubt the point of view and the surroundings of the man made some difference. Wainewright was surveyed through an eyelet-hole in one of the cells where there were four prisoners, so Macready tells the story in his *Reminiscences*. Macready also relates how, in the year 1821, he had dined in Wainewright's handsome rooms in Great Marlborough Street, meeting at his table, Hazlitt, Cary, the translator of Dante, Proctor, and some others. "He was then an artist, a disciple and imitator of Fuseli, and a *litterateur*." He was then, or very soon afterwards, "the best stay" of the *London Magazine*, as Lamb described him, "the kind, light-hearted," the "light, and warm as light-hearted," Janus Weathercock.

Mr. Carew Hazlitt has been at great pains to collect the writings of Wainewright; but a small volume has resulted, however. It must be remembered, however, that Wainewright was only an occasional

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essayist; as Mr. Hazlitt states, his literary earnings were "undoubtedly, from first to last, very insignificant;" his career as an author extended only over some four or five years. As he wrote anonymously, or pseudonymously, there may be extant other of his papers which have escaped the attention of his editor; but enough has been recovered to test his quality as an author, and, it may be added, to justify, in a great measure, the literary reputation he enjoyed. The singular coxcombry of his writings was due in part to the man's own nature, but also in part to the fashion of his time. What was called, derisively, the "Silver Fork" school of literature—as though the steel or the iron forks were preferable implements!—was much in vogue fifty and sixty years ago, producing, among other works, the dandiacal novels of *Vivian Grey*, *Pelham*, *Granby*, etc. Wainewright affected dandy airs, the affectation costing him little trouble, and wrote attractive, dandy articles for the magazines. But his writings further disclosed that he possessed considerable literary power, that he boasted a wide knowledge of books, and that he had a practical and technical acquaintances with the processes of art. His taste might be impeachable; his special admiration of Fuseli will now find little sympathy, for Fuseli is viewed to-day as one of the exposed shams of the fine arts; but Wainewright's criticisms owned a decided value in that they were the criticisms of a skilled and thoroughly informed artist. His reviews of the exhibitions at Somerset House may even now be read with interest and pleasure, as they were read by Charles Lamb, upon their first publication. He seemed to De Quincey "a *parvenu*, not at home even amongst his second-rate splendour." But De Quincey wrote after revelation had been made of the criminal courses of Wainewright, whose social position was certainly equal to that of his fellow contributors to the *London Magazine*. He had been an officer of dragoons, he entered good society, and he entertained at his table many of the most famous men of his time. Among his artist friends were numbered Fuseli, Flaxman, Stothard, Westall and Lawrence. Lamb's death, it may be noted, occurred in 1834; the malefactions of Wainewright had not at that time been disclosed. Moreover, Wainewright's connection with the *London Magazine*, and probably also with Lamb, had ceased some ten years before.

If, for a moment, I may personally intrude upon the reader's attention, I would explain that my interest in the case of Thomas Griffiths Wainewright dates quite from my earliest years. I first heard the story of the criminal from my father, who, it so happened, was the solicitor employed by certain of the insurance offices, the Eagle, the Imperial, and the Guardian, to defend the actions brought against them, and, incidentally, to "hunt down" the plaintiff, and to expose his real character. I had afterwards opportunities of studying the papers connected with the case, including the briefs delivered to counsel—Sir John Campbell, the

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Attorney-General, Sir Frederick Pollock, Mr. Thesiger, and Mr. Robinson, and the shorthand writers' notes of the trials. Wainewright's diary, which, as Mr. Hazlitt records, he searched for in vain at the offices of the Imperial and Pelican Insurance Companies, were really deposited at the offices of the Eagle Insurance Company, then occupying premises in the Crescent Bridge Street, Blackfriars, the site of the station of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway Company. The diary could not be discovered, however, when, some years since, enquiry was made concerning it by Charles Dickens of his friend, the late Henry Porter Smith, the secretary of the company. The manuscript had disappeared; it was believed that it had been destroyed because of its unwholesomeness, and because there seemed to be no further need for its existence. It was supposed to contain some truths of a distressing kind enough, amid much that was plainly artificial and even grossly and palpably false.

DUTTON COOK.

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MAJOR WAGSTAFF'S WIG.

SOME twenty years ago there dwelt, in the straggling little High Street of the quaint old Cathedral town of Thorpestone, an old bachelor, by name, William Newton. Here, under the shadow of the grey cathedral cloisters, he lived in a comfortable old house, with its stained glass oriel window looking out into the street in front, and behind it a quaint, old-fashioned garden, whose well-trimmed lawn sloped gently down to the banks of the river Thorpe. In this pleasant home the worthy gentleman contentedly spent his days, watching his apricots ripen in the summer sun, reading his books in his snug and well-stocked library, and entertaining his more intimate friends with simple hospitality; and being of kindly disposition, of unaffected piety, and given to all good works, he was respected by all, and much beloved by a few devoted friends; but of all his relations and friends none had so deep-rooted a place in the old man's heart as his nephew, Harry, the son of his only brother, who was long since dead. Harry Newton, thanks to the liberality of his uncle, had lately purchased a partnership in the oldest firm of solicitors in Thorpestone, and was doing remarkably well; he loved his uncle with the devotion of a son, and no pleasanter sight could be seen than uncle and nephew walking, arm-in-arm, of a summer's evening down the well-trimmed walks of the little garden. And so years rolled on, and Mr. Newton jogged quietly with them; and so many years had he lived in this quiet seclusion that the good people of Thorpestone had come to look upon him as a confirmed recluse, and had long since ceased to send him invitations to their various parties; when lo! a "change came o'er the spirit of the dream." Three years before the commencement of my story there came to live in Thorpestone a half-pay officer, named Major Wagstaff; and, as it happened, he took up his quarters in the comfortable house of Mrs. Robinson, Harry Newton's landlady (for Mr. Newton was far too sensible a man to make his nephew live in a dull house with an old bachelor), Harry Newton soon got to know his fellow lodger, and ere long introduced him to his worthy uncle, when, to the surprise of all Thorpestone and to nobody more than Harry himself, the strangest friendship sprang up between the two old gentlemen. Mr. Newton, like many men who have lived all their lives in retirement, enjoyed hearing tales and wonders of lands he had never seen. And Major Wagstaff would talk about his varied experiences as long as he could get anybody

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to listen to him. Now, Major Wagstaff, having come with good introductions, was soon asked to all the best houses in Thorpestone, and, enjoying society, was a regular attendant at all the Thorpestone gaieties. But he did not rest contented with that, he determined that his friend, Mr. Newton, should enjoy them too; and what with perpetual bothering him and working upon his friend's naturally passive nature, he overcame the habits and scruples of the old bachelor, and one fine summer day he succeeded in inducing him to go to a grand garden party, given by the Dean, an invitation for which Mr. Newton had, for a wonder, received. Imagine Harry Newton's surprise when on entering the Dean's garden, he saw his uncle, clad in a frock coat of antique build, and a hat that, from its appearance, could not have seen light for the last twenty years, handing tea and ices to the dowagers of Thorpestone.

The Dean's garden party was but the thin end of the wedge. The old man's simple vanity was gratified by the congratulations he received on all sides on his unexpected reappearance in society, and soon he was as constant a *habitué* of the Thorpestone gaieties as the little Major himself. There wasn't a dance, a drum, rout, tea-fight or garden party in Thorpestone that wasn't graced by the presence of the two old gentlemen. And truly a strange contrast they make: Mr. Newton, tall and slight with scanty locks and high forehead, quietly dressed, and with a simple old-fashioned courtesy that savoured of a by-gone age; the Major, on the other hand, pompous in manner, short and stout in appearance, and with a red face, adorned by a very black moustache and whiskers, and surmounted by a plentiful supply of silky hair of the very darkest hue. Ill-natured people in Thorpestone used to point to the Major's name in the tell-tale Army List, and make very ill-natured remarks regarding the Major's ebon locks; but then, you see, in a small cathedral town, unless the Canon's youngest daughter is kind enough to run away with the junior Verger, or the Precentor and the organist have the consideration to quarrel in the cathedral aisle, topics for conversation—at least such conversation as Thorpestone loved—are apt to grow scarce, and as you must have some subjects to talk about during the long winter evenings, the Major's hair did quite as well as any other.

In the meantime, Harry Newton viewed the strange friendship with feelings of doubt and suspicion. He liked the old Major well enough as a dinner companion, but, knowing the simplicity and generosity of his uncle, he objected strongly to the influence and ascendancy the Major was gradually assuming over him; besides, which Harry saw plain enough that when they dined together it was invariably at his uncle's house, when they drove to a party it was his uncle who paid the cabman, if they arranged to go to a concert, the Major would be graciously pleased to allow Mr. Newton to pay for both tickets, and so on; and Harry determined if ever he

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should have an opportunity of breaking up this very one-sided friendship, he would not hesitate to use it. However, time went on, the two old gentlemen apparently grew thicker than ever, and the wished-for opportunity never came to Harry Newton. Fate, however, accomplished what Harry could not; and fate, on this occasion, took the shape of a widow.

A year or so after the Dean's garden party Thorpestone was in a state of flutter, owing to the arrival of a widow, who had taken a pretty house on the banks of the Thorpe. All they knew was, that her name was Mrs. Lomax, she was the widow of a London stockbroker, and that she was coming to Thorpestone.

Popular excitement was at its height as the widow appeared in the Cathedral the first Sunday after her arrival; and, as regards her personal appearance, the male portion at least of Thorpestone, was perfectly satisfied, for she was a plump, lively-looking woman of forty-five or so, and dressed in perfect taste. She furnished her house prettily and waited for the neighbours to call on her.

Nor did she wait long; in a month or so she had the honour of receiving a visit from no less a personage than the wife of the Dean, and, let me tell you, in the good town of Thorpestone, to be called upon by the Mrs. and Misses Dean was to be at once stamped with the hall mark of respectability. The rest of the town followed, and Mrs. Lomax, being fond of society and having plenty of money, soon made the house the most popular in the town. Her Thursday receptions were invariably crowded, and among those who never failed to attend were Mr. Newton and Major Wagstaff. Both thought the widow charming, both soon began to have dim thoughts that, after all, bachelorhood was but a cheerless way of passing through the sear and yellow leaf, and both began to sound the other on the subject as they walked away together from the pretty little house on the river bank. But very soon the day arrived, when they did not walk together to and from the widow's house, but when, on the contrary, each went stealthily by *himself*, not on the reception day at all, but when Mrs. Lomax was most likely to be alone, and as each walked up to the hall door each trusted in his heart that the other would not be there. Mrs. Lomax soon saw how matters stood, and, being fond of fun, played her admirers off, the one against the other, with all the skill of a finished coquette. The friendship between them had already begun to cool, and when the Major found Mr. Newton on Christmas Day, 18—, having a *tête-à-tête* with the widow, over a cup of five o'clock tea, he smothered a remark scarcely suitable to the sacred character of the day, and strode back to his own house with rage and mortification in his heart. That evening Harry came to eat his Christmas turkey as usual with his uncle; he noticed that the latter was unusually preoccupied, and being a pretty shrewd fellow he knew very well the cause. He had observed the cleft between the two men gradually widening with feelings of intense pleasure, for he would have gladly seen his

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uncle married to the jolly widow, and thus have somebody to look after him in his old age; "and," thought Harry, "I don't mind much *what* happens as long as the Major gets his *congé*," so, as he sat at dessert with Mr. Newton he skilfully led the conversation up to the matter, and finding him in a sympathetic—if despondent—mood, soon managed to extract the whole truth.

"Come, uncle," said Harry, after Mr. Newton ceased talking, "the whole matter resolves itself into this—both you and the Major are sweet on Mrs. Lomax, and you are afraid he'll cut you out. Eh?"

"Well, Harry," said the uncle, "you put things a little plainly, you know, still I'm bound to confess you're not far wrong. But Harry, dear boy, remember," he continued, "even if I was fortunate enough to marry Mrs. Lomax, I shouldn't allow it to interfere with your future prospects, and whatever money I intended——"

"Now, uncle," interrupted Harry, "please stop talking like that; you've been more than a father to me ever since I was a little child, and if you were never to give me another sixpence from to-day, you would have already done far more for me than I could ever hope to repay; so please don't let anything of that sort enter into your mind. I'm in a good business, healthy, strong, and love my profession—what more does a young man want; and if there is one thing left to make me happier, it would be to see you married to some nice lady, like our friend, Mrs. Lomax! And, by-the-bye, uncle, I suppose you're going to her dance on New Year's Day."

"Yes, of course," said the old gentleman, with a blush.

"And the Major too?" asked Harry.

"Oh! indeed yes," he replied, dolefully: "he's going to open the dance with her: she at first asked me to, but I had refused, for you know I can't dance, and I'm afraid I'm a little too old to learn now."

Harry went on sipping his port and pondering deeply; suddenly his eye twinkled, and he looked up and said,

"I suppose, uncle, if anything were to stop the Major going in for the widow you would try yourself—straightaway, I mean."

"I-er think I-er *might* try," replied the uncle.

"Done with you," cried Harry. "Now mind, uncle, if anything stops the Major I shall expect you to have a shot yourself."

And very soon he said good-night, and returned to his lodgings. On arriving there he went straight up to the Major's room, and found that worthy smoking a cheroot over a novel.

"Look here, Major," said Harry, "you're going to Mrs. Lomax's dance, aren't you?"

"Yes!" replied the Major, "why?"

"Oh! I am going too, and I thought if you would care to dine downstairs with me at seven, we could have a quiet smoke after dinner and go together."

"Very well," said the Major; "but as I have to open the ball

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with Mrs. Lomax at nine, I should like the cab not later than a quarter to nine."

Harry Newton, as he started to the office on New Year's Day, called his landlady and told her Major Wagstaff would dine with him at a quarter-past seven; and as he left the room, he opened the clock glass and put the hands back a quarter-of-an-hour. In the evening the Major arrived at seven, in full evening costume; Harry looked for a moment at his hair with deep anxiety and then gave a sigh of relief.

"Come before your time, Major, it wants a quarter-of-an-hour yet to dinner."

The Major looked at the clock, and replied, "So it seems by your clock, but I make the hour by my watch. Are you quite sure you're right?"

"Oh perfectly!" said Newton; "but, never mind, dinner will soon be up," and in a quarter-of-an-hour it appeared. It was a nice little bachelors' dinner, and the Major evidently enjoyed it. As soon as it was over, Harry drew the chairs to the fire and asked the Major to have a cigar. The Major hesitated, thought of dancing with the widow in a smoke-perfumed coat; but when Harry suggested a certain brand of Henry Clays the Major specially loved, the latter gave way. Harry went to the sideboard, fetched out a box, which, alas, was empty. "Oh," said he, "it's odd, there's not one left. Just excuse me one moment, Major, I have my case full up-stairs on my dressing-table."

It took at least five minutes for Harry to find that cigar-case, and he seemed to be very red and excited from the search. They each lit a cigar and smoked on; as the hands of Newton's clock pointed to half-past eight a cab drove up to the door, and there was a ring at the front-door bell.

"By Jove!" said Newton, looking at his watch, "that's our cab; and, what's more, Major, you *are* right, my clock is a quarter-of-an-hour slow, and it's now a quarter to nine."

"Good heavens!" cried the Major, "we shall be late; I must just run up to my room for a moment."

The Major darted upstairs, while Harry stood at the foot on the passage with fixed lips and beating heart. Suddenly he heard the Major yell out, "Hang it, Newton, I can't find my matches; for goodness sake bring me a box."

Harry waited a moment, and then ran up to the Major's room and said,

"Bad luck be it, Major, I can't find one in the place, and I haven't time to get you a candle; but you're all right, Major, you know, and unless you're sharp you'll be awfully late—good gracious! there goes the hour chiming!

The Major rushed downstairs, breathlessly seized a hat, and dashed into the cab—Harry giving vent to a chuckle as they passed a gas-lamp in the hall. In five minutes they arrived at the

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widow's house. As the door opened, the footman looked at the Major and began to grin from ear to ear; but Harry, who walked behind, soon stopped the flunkey's mirth by putting his finger to his lips and displaying a half-sovereign. The result of this manœuvre was magical; and, having told the Major to go up first, the latter was conducted with becoming gravity to the drawing-room, where Mrs. Lomax was anxiously waiting for him to open the dance.

"Major Wagstaff!!" cries the footman.

"How d'ye do, my dear madam," began the little Major, with his politest bow: "allow me to wish you a happy new year." He saw, however, to his astonishment, the happy face of the widow grow broader, and an irrepressible smile wreathing round her lips as she replied,

"Oh, Major Wagstaff, how-er funny-er—you are."

"Funny, madam! I really fail to see any fun in my remark, I can assure you it came from the bottom of my heart."

Hereupon the widow, having endured for thirty seconds the agonies of suffocation in ineffectually endeavouring to withstrain her mirth, burst into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, followed by everybody in the room.

"Good heavens! madam, what *is* the cause of this ill-timed mirth," cried the indignant Major.

"Your funny" (sob) "hair" (sob), shrieked the widow.

The Major, happening at that moment to catch a glimpse of himself in a pier-glass close at hand, saw to his horror that the locks that hitherto had been as black as the raven's wing were now as fiery as the rising sun. Yes, notwithstanding the fact that the hair on his face was jet-black, that on his head was glowing red—red! no, I say carrots! With a terrible imprecation he rushed from the house and returned to his lodgings; and, dreading the universal chaff that would for the future await him on all sides, and knowing his reputation as a lady-killer gone for ever, he left Thorpestone the next morning.

As he flew downstairs there was one person, however, who gave an inward chuckle of satisfaction, and that was Master Harry, who had waited on the landing ensconced behind a curtain, and there saw that almost unexpected success had attended his cunningly-devised plot. For Harry Newton had often observed that when he and the Major dined together before going to a dance or concert, no matter how carefully the Major might have been dressed for dinner, he always made a point of running upstairs for a few minutes just before starting, and coming downstairs with his hair unusually black, glossy, and well brushed. From which remarkable phenomenon Harry easily concluded that the very last piece of the Major's toilet was to change his ordinary wig for the one he used on special occasions. Therefore, as soon as they had arranged to dine together, Harry betook himself

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to the coiffeur he knew Major Wagstaff patronised, and after a little pecuniary transaction had passed between them, he found out that not only was the barber accustomed to re-dress the Major's wig, but that he actually had one of them in his hands undergoing repair. So by dint of bribery and persuasion Harry induced him to make a wig the exact fac-simile of the one then in his hands, only fiery red instead of black. Having delayed dinner, and having ordered the cabman to come five minutes too soon; when dinner was concluded, under the specious excuse of finding his cigar-case, he went to the Major's bed-room; and there, to his delight, on the dressing-table lay a glossy well-combed wig. Harry substituted the red one, took away the matches from both the Major's room and his own, and when the cab came and the Major found himself late, what between the darkness and the bustle he fell easily into the cleverly conceived trap; and never discovered his mistake till he saw his carrotty pate in Mrs. Lomax's pier-glass.

The widow soon recovered her equanimity and the dance went off capitally. A few days after old Mr. Newton, seeing his only rival disposed of, proposed to the widow and was accepted. They are now the happiest couple in Thorpeshire; and if ever they happen to be in a fit of the dumps or blues, they have only to think of Major Wagstaff and his wig, and a hearty laugh is the immediate result!

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DISAPPOINTED MEN.

THERE are few speculations which seem to possess greater attractions for the human mind than the somewhat unprofitable and illogical enquiry, "What might have been?" Philosophers may smile at our simplicity; yet there is always a charm in surmising what a Chatterton or a Kirke White might have accomplished if their lives had been prolonged, though in this very supposition we are imagining what is not only impossible, but, if we regard the matter rightly, unimaginable, since, in the inevitable series of circumstances, effect must follow cause with unalterable precision, and nothing could possibly have happened otherwise than it has happened. There is, however, another similar question, which we shall perhaps find more profitable and not less interesting to discuss; why it is that some men, who seem to be gifted with all the essential qualities and characteristics of genius, fail to attain that success to which they might reasonably aspire. Instead of vainly repining at the fixed and unquestionable laws of nature, we shall thus be merely considering the conditions under which one of these laws is seen to work.

"Disappointed men," in the sense which I have already indicated, are, unfortunately, far from uncommon. In every branch of society and every phase of life, we are often reminded of the truth of those two remarkable lines in "Sohrab and Rustum":

> "For some are born to do great deeds and live,
> And some are born to be obscured and die."

There are few, indeed, who can look back to their school-days, without being able to recall examples of disappointed boys, youthful prodigies, who, as it was secretly whispered throughout the school, were in reality vastly superior, in this or that department of learning, to the more fortunate individuals who carried off the prizes, though through some strange freak of fortune, or otherwise inexplicable cause, they invariably failed to do themselves justice upon public examination. We all can remember well some similar instance in the cricket field, some disappointed and disappointing member of our school eleven, who proved himself by his style to be theoretically the best batsman, yet practically always failed his party in the time of need. So also at the University, in every examination and in every athletic contest there was always some "dark horse," if I may borrow a sporting phrase, some free lance among the competitors, who was privately understood to be eminently capable of success, yet never secured any

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substantial recognition of his merits. Nor are such characters to be found only in boyhood and youth; in every profession and rank of life there are men who, to all appearance, are qualified by their genius and accomplishments to take a prominent place in society, yet are thwarted and retarded at every step by some unaccountable and unapparent personal shortcoming, or some malignant spite of fortune.

For how else are we to explain this most interesting though most unfortunate class of characters?

If we choose between the two commonest theories, we must either attribute their failure to some natural defect and innate inferiority, which, in spite of their seeming ability, condemns them to perpetual disappointment (a condition of things which would be described in common phraseology as "their own fault"); or we must believe that the success which they are naturally capable of attaining is kept from them by the external circumstances and so-called "chances" of life. The first of these two views is, in the main, the one taken by Carlyle—according to his doctrine, the genius of a great man is not called into activity by the circumstances of the age in which he lives. "The Time call forth? Alas, we have known Times *call* loudly enough for their great man, but not find him when they called! He was not there; Providence had not sent him."[1] Neither can genius be ultimately baffled and defeated by unfavourable conditions of time and place, for it is heaven-sent and independent of all external circumstances. "The most precious gift that Heaven can give to the earth; a man of 'genius,' as we call it; the Soul of a man actually sent down from the skies with a God's-message to us."[2] And again "No great man lives in vain. The History of the world is but the Biography of great men."[3]

There is a great gulf fixed between the heroic and the commonplace nature; as the former will never fail, so the latter will never succeed in performing great deeds; for they are essentially different in quality, and not only in their incidental surroundings. The criterion of greatness is therefore success.

Such, however, is not the general opinion. The more common belief is that genius may be fatally influenced and circumscribed by fortune; that great men are often made or marred by the circumstances under which their life is cast. This is the popular notion to which Gray has given expression in a passage now proverbial.

> "Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
> Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
> Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd,
> Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre,"

According to this view success is no safe criterion of greatness

[1] On *Heroes*, ch. i. [2] On *Heroes*, ch. ii. [3] On *Heroes*, ch. i.

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the failure of disappointed men, the "village-Hampdens" and "mute inglorious Miltons," may, for all we know, be owing to the absence of opportunity, or some other wholly external cause.

It is difficult to decide between these two opinions, for, though each seems to contain a portion of the truth, neither is entirely conclusive or satisfactory. The whole question is, indeed, one of those mysteries of life which we cannot hope to elucidate or finally determine. We may call it if we like "the survival of the fittest," or by some other scientific name, but the mystery still remains unsolved, why, out of a number of men who are apparently equally gifted by nature, some are fit and others unfit for successfully competing in the great struggle of life. It would of course greatly expedite and simplify the difficulty, if we could assume, with Carlyle, that there is some absolute and natural inferiority in these "Disappointed Men," and that external circumstances are in no way the cause of their failure; for we should then be able to believe that there is no waste, even in this life, of genius, that most precious of all human possessions. The great man never fails to fulfil his heaven-inspired task, the ordinary man must always fail to accomplish that for which he is by nature incapacitated. But, unfortunately, this theory, so simple in itself, is contrary to general experience and observation, for it is a sad fact, but nevertheless a true one, that there is a mysterious wastefulness in nature which cannot be accounted for by the supposition that only the unfit perish while the fittest survive. Where is the proof that the apple which the wind dashed prematurely from its branch was inferior to the others that remained unscathed; or that the crop which the rain injured was worse by nature than the one which was brought to perfection by a summer sun? So also with the genius of man; we can scarcely refuse to admit that in many cases, the cause of failure has been the niggardliness of fortune rather than any natural defect.

On the other hand the common belief, to which Gray has given poetical expression, is only partially true and will not wholly account for the difficulty. External circumstances may sometimes curtail genius; but there are also many cases where men of genius fail, when to all appearance they have good opportunity of succeeding, and where the fault cannot justly be laid on fortune.

Before going further, it may be well to illustrate my meaning by a few instances. I do not wish to take as my examples men who have failed through obviously mistaking or over-rating their own powers; though such cases are generally sad and interesting enough, as for instance, that of "Daddy Crisp," the friend and adviser of Miss Burney, who ruined his own prospects in life by persisting in imagining himself to be a great dramatic genius.

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Still less do I mean to celebrate the vagaries of merely erratic genius, for, in spite of Dryden's assertion that, "great wits are sure to madness near allied," I believe there is a very appreciable difference between a man of genius, and a "ne'er-do-well." I refer rather to men who, to all outward seeming, have real genius, but for some cause or other fail to turn their powers to any practical advantage. The typical instance of this class of men is, of course, to be found in Mr. Browning's "Waring." In him we see represented a man of truly heroic soul, who, with all the elements of success, could not, or did not, succeed,

> "As up and down he paced this London,
> With no work done, but great works undone,"

And finally vanished from the view of his friends and acquaintances, perhaps to re-appear as a leader of men, better appreciated in some distant land.

There are many "Warings" in real life, less heroic, perhaps, yet in some degree similar in nature to Mr. Browning's disappointed hero. "What's become of Waring" is a question which we have all asked at some time or other, when we have recalled to mind some acquaintance of our early years, who once gave promise of future greatness. It is difficult, however, to mention famous examples of such characters, for fame is reserved for successful, not disappointed, heroes. Yet it is instructive to consider such a character as that of Branwell, the talented, but ill-fated brother of Charlotte Brontë. "He was full," says Mrs. Gaskell[1], "of noble impulses, as well as of extraordinary gifts. . . He had a stronger desire for literary fame burning in his heart than even that which occasionally flashed up in his sisters'. He tried various outlets for his talents." And again, in another passage—"Poor misguided fellow! this craving to see and know London, and that stronger craving after fame, were never to be satisfied. He was to die at the end of a short and blighted life." It is indeed a strange and mysterious fact, that while the sisters, from whom little was expected, were destined "to do great deeds and live," the brother, who was the pride and hope of the whole Brontë family, should have been destined "to be obscured and die." It is difficult, if not impossible, to discever wherein lies the essential difference between such men as these and those who are more successful. We may even see, from the characters of some famous men, how narrow and how ill-defined is the line that divides success from failure; the heroic from the commonplace. The scale of genius, as of all other qualities, is a gradual one; there is often much that is heroic in ordinary people, and much that is ordinary in heroes. In which class are we to place such characters as Hartley Coleridge? And many other instances might be produced of men who are thus on the

[1] *Life of Charlotte Brontë.*

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borderland of greatness, yet have produced no great work. Even in a man as indubitably great as de Quincey we find almost more of failure than of success; he was in many senses of the word a "disappointed man."

In discussing such characters it would be waste of time to attempt to explain what is inexplicable, or to account for what is unaccountable; yet it will probably be found that the truth lies somewhere between the two theories before mentioned. It is true, as Gray says, that genius is often hampered and hindered by the various accidents of life; it is also true, as Carlyle says, that the failure is sometimes caused by personal deficiency. Yet this deficiency cannot be correctly called lack of power, or mental inferiority, but is rather a certain diffidence in giving expression to private views; a dislike of entering the lists of public controversy; or one of the numberless obstacles which often, as in the case of "Waring," bar the paths of men who might otherwise be great. Herein, it seems to me, lies the only possible clue to the solution of the mystery; or at least the only consolation for what is otherwise entirely sad and disappointing.

And here I must again draw my illustrations from the poetry of Mr. Browning, who, above all other writers, has treated this class of character with tenderness and appreciation. He, at least, will sanction no harsh judgment, will draw no hard and fast line between the heroic and commonplace; for it is his evident opinion that success is not the only or the final criterion of true greatness; that those who fail here are not necessarily of a lower or baser nature than those who succeed, even though their failure cannot be accounted for by lack of good fortune or opportunity. He shows in "Rabbi Ben Ezra," how a man may fail before the eyes of his fellow-men, and yet succeed before God and his own conscience.

"Not on the vulgar mass
Called 'work' must sentence pass,
Things done, that took the eye and had the price;
O'er which, from level stand,
The low world laid its hand,
Found straightway to its mind, could value in a trice.

But all the world's coarse thumb
And finger failed to plumb,
So passed in making up the main account;
All instincts immature,
All purposes unsure,
That weighed not as his work, yet swelled the man's amount.

Thoughts hardly to be packed
Into a narrow act,
Fancies that broke through language and escaped;
All I could never be,
All men ignored in me,
This I was worth to God, whose wheel the pitcher shaped.

And again, in *Abt Vogler* we find the beautiful and consolator

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suggestion that failure in this world may be only the prelude of success hereafter in a future and fuller existence.

> "The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,
> The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,
> Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard;
> Enough that he heard it once: we shall hear it by-and-bye."

This may seem to some but a poetical fancy and an idealist's dream; yet to many it will appear, not only a nobler, but a truer method of treating the subject, than that adopted by the most practical and realistic of our writers. In *Middlemarch* we recognise in Lydgate the character of a disappointed man, disappointed through no apparent fault of his own, but through the inevitable force of a pitiless destiny, and the selfishness of those by whom he was surrounded. His failure is absolute, irreparable; there is no alleviating circumstance in this life, and no hope is held out of future consolation. It seems to me that there is little "truth," though plenty of dry and hard "fact," in such a picture as this; it is the mere scientific photograph of a life, devoid of all the warmth and colour which only the artist's hand can give. But the whole subject is one which excludes positive knowledge or dogmatic assertion; and the more we consider this question of disappointed lives, the more strange and mysterious will it appear, and the more shall we realise the truth of Charles Lamb's words,

> "The economy of Heaven is dark,
> And wisest clerks have missed the mark."

H. S. S.

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THE PROPOSED CHANNEL TUNNEL.

WILL Englishmen never learn the lessons taught by past experience, never learn to avoid the quicksands on which they have so often foundered? Will they not remember the bitter results of the South Sea Bubble and numberless similar misfortunes? Will they still make fresh experiments with dangerous tools of which they know so little? Is no proposal so Quixotic but that some corner may be found on our shores where it will be carefully nurtured and brought to perfection? Ask any chemist who spends his life in experimentalising how often he meets with success and how often with failure! And shall we take another ticket in the lottery, again try another experiment?

How true it is that history repeats itself, for at this moment we are asked to tempt Fortune once more by undertaking a work the most insane and useless that perverted human ingenuity ever devised.

We are asked to remove England from her proud position as an island and reduce her to a mere appendage of the Continent. We are asked, in spite of past failures, to make another experiment on a still grander scale, and one involving more stupendous interests. We must, in effect, tell Nature that she has made a mistake, for which we in the nineteenth century have found the remedy! She has left her work unfinished—we will bring it to perfection!

It is proposed that we take shares in a so-called "commercial" undertaking, that we enter into articles of partnership the most ill-chosen possible. It is of all nations with the French, England's ancient enemies, between a large portion of whose people and our own there exist keen rivalry, bitter feelings, angry thoughts, smouldering, 'tis true, but still there, ready to burst into a furious conflagration when fanned by some passing wind. It is with them we are asked to make a binding, indissoluble agreement. Other partnerships, if they turn out to be undesirable, can be cancelled—not so this one. Yet what more unsuitable partners could be found! Differing in manners, language, religion (or perhaps want of religion), morals, aims, and objects, what more hybrid association could be suggested? To those with whom we have seldom, even for a short time, pulled together harmoniously, it is expected that we should yoke ourselves by a tie which once formed cannot be broken except at an

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incalculable loss, which will hamper every movement and beset us with difficulties wherever we turn. In peace it would produce endless bickerings and quarrels, while in time of war, if not the actual cause of hostilities, its presence would be an unpleasant addition.

There have appeared from time to time various disjointed facts and short notices in connection with this Channel Tunnel, but from such sources little satisfactory information can be gathered.

A more detailed account has been attempted by Lord Brabourne, who in the *Contemporary Review* offers a defence on its behalf. Considering the personal interest which he has in the undertaking and the thorough knowledge he must have of all its details in consequence of being on the Board of the Submarine Continental Railway Company, it may fairly be assumed that this is the best defence that can be given, and in order to see the merits and demerits of the case, perhaps we cannot do better than use it as a guide.

In whatever light we view the matter, it is evident that the result of all investigations will finally be ranged under two heads. Firstly, comes the question what are the benefits which we may reasonably expect if the proposed scheme be carried into execution? And, secondly, what are the dangers—some, no doubt, remote—against which the most competent authorities warn us?

With reference to the latter point, after what has been said by Lords Admiral Dunsany and General Wolseley, it would be as presumptive of me, even if inclined to do so, to make light of the difficulties as to imagine that the expression of my opinion could add weight to theirs. Their decision shall only be referred to as forming in part the ground of Lord Brabourne's argument.

It may seem paradoxical to say that although the second question mentioned above is of the highest importance, and cannot be too strictly enquired into, yet at the same time it *has* indirectly usurped more than its share of attention; because, all our efforts, or nearly all, being employed in seeking for a solution to the matter of greater and more immediate importance, we are apt to overlook the one of lesser magnitude. It is taken for granted that we shall certainly derive some considerable advantages if the project be carried into execution, but we cannot stop now to consider what these advantages exactly are, we shall find time for that bye-and-bye, at present all our energies must be devoted to find out whether the threatened dangers can be averted. A huge mountain lies before us: can we by any means reach its summit and descend safely on the other side? No, Englishmen, there is another question which we must also ask ourselves: if we brave all the hardships, troubles, dangers, and at last seem likely to reach the top, what is there on the other side to compensate for all this? It shall be my object to point out that the compensation is just about zero; it may be a little more or a little

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less, but it cannot vary much. The promoters themselves of the scheme show how weak is their argument here, for while the hero of Tel-el-Kebir beseeches us to think of the increased facilities which would thus be afforded for invasion, and the evils which *must* result in the shape of an increased army, taxes, etc., whether an invasion ever takes place or not, Lord Brabourne and his colleagues assure us that we need have no more qualms about seasickness now, and that the patience of invalids will not in future be tried while waiting for fair weather to cross the Channel—"You may get in at Charing Cross, and we'll bring you without change to Paris!" Is not this somewhat puerile? Is the inconvenience of individuals to be put in one scale, though only as a help, maybe, and the independence of an Empire in the other?

The next argument, however, is more weighty. It is said that England will derive commercial benefits from the enterprise. Now as we are *par excellence* a commercial nation, this suggestion is received with more favour than would otherwise fall to its share. But on this account there is need to take extra precautions, for men are always more easily persuaded that a statement is true when the suggestion coincides with their wishes. Enquiry must therefore be carefully made as to how this supposed advantage will arise, and what guarantees there are of its existence. Whenever communication is opened between places which have hitherto had few opportunities of mutual intercourse, there is then likelihood of the community receiving substantial benefits by the increased facilities for moving from place to place. But where there is this communication already, and ample means of transport, a new railway cannot offer these advantages. At present the public has no reason to complain that there is any unnecessary delay or inconvenience in getting to and from the Continent. It is not proposed to take in any new part of the country: all would still have to pass through Dover and Calais or their vicinity.

Does any one fancy that it will cost less for either goods or passengers than at present? It would be somewhat premature just yet to expect the shareholders or directors to issue their scale of charges, but we may perhaps form some idea for ourselves. To begin with, as has been remarked, the present tariff is not only moderate, but extremely low. Then of all modes of carriage that by water is cheaper than by land, and when the journey is by sea it becomes still less expensive. Railway transit is much dearer; but when, in addition to the metals, carriages, engines, etc., a tunnel has to be made under water the *whole* distance, then it becomes a costly undertaking, and it passes my comprehension to see how a reduced tariff can be managed; this being equally true of passengers and of goods. No, the poor man can never gain anything from this plan, it is only those who are able and willing to pay extra for their comfort.

It will be noticed that I do not profess to foretell what ratio

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the actual returns will bear to the expenditure. I do not assert that the undertaking will not pay the shareholders, for of course they might retort "that is our look out"; but what I do insist upon is the great probability, if not certainty, that increased prices will be the result. Nor can the saving of time be material —it would, most likely, only be reckoned by minutes. Thus the tunnel would not be used except by a small number of those going abroad. But even if it were universally employed and the steamers obliged to cease running, then would occur the very disaster we wish to avoid, *viz.*, a monopoly, when exorbitant prices would certainly be charged. Now this, in itself, would be a hindrance to commerce.

But Lord Brabourne invites us to view the subject from a higher vantage ground; he scorns such low ideas, and points triumphantly to the "friendly intercourse" which *must* (of course there is absolutely no doubt) immediately spring up, and to the perfect goodwill which *must* ensue, so sublime that it cannot be adequately expressed in words, but is left to each one's imagination! Such a lasting peace will be cemented that our soldiers may be turned into porters (for the sake of the argument, all admirers of the scheme are expected to forget that there are other nations to be considered besides our neighbours on the other side of the channel), and our barracks, arsenals, etc., into warehouses for merchandise! And all this is to be brought about by some twenty or thirty miles of tunnel! Wonders never cease.

Before Lord Brabourne was elevated to the Peerage, and had thrown his great weight into the Conservative cause, he helped to send a "message of peace" to Ireland, with an escort of 35,000 troops. Elated with its success, he longs to establish a similar peace between England and France!

If it were proposed to join us by the same means to our possessions in Africa or India, and the plan were feasible, one might then expect some of the desired results to follow, but to believe that the journey between London and Paris is to be shortened by so many minutes, or hours, if you will, that *therefore* human nature will be changed, is absurd. Although everyone rejoices that there is at least an outward peace between this country and France, are we sure that it is not indeed merely superficial, awaiting some trivial incident to give place to a very different state of things? Even at this moment, as if to justify my words, it is well known that the two Governments have tried for the last couple of years to renew the terms on which we had hitherto carried on our commerce, or at least with partial modifications, but with no satisfactory results. And now the last chance seems to have failed us, for Gambetta, the best friend we had in France, is dead; he who alone strove unceasingly to renew the Commercial Treaty on such terms as would be acceptable to us, is no more. Who then is sanguine enough to imagine that if a tunnel were made such

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difficulties would disappear? If you tunnelled right through the world, that would not change man's selfishness.

If easy communication between countries is desirable, we may fairly expect to find that those whom Nature has placed in closest contiguity are on the most friendly terms. Is this so? Take the case of Germany and the country with which it is proposed to connect ourselves, France; they have no physical barriers to prevent their intercourse; nowhere are their territories separated by more than a river, and not even by that since the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine. But has this produced a peaceful alliance; increased their commerce, or helped the cause of civilisation? The chief object of the Germans after the last war was, on their own showing, to obtain such a line of fortresses and territory as would enable them more effectually to prevent the easy passage of their neighbours to their own soil. What right have we to suppose that if we were joined to either belligerent she would treat us differently? In 1870, many thought that England should join her arms to those of France, because the two countries lay so near each other; if we practically approached still nearer this plea could be urged with so much more force.

There is as keen rivalry and jealousy between the United States and Canada as between any other countries; and if we go to South America, it will generally be found that some of the various States are engaged in war. One may well exclaim, "Preserve me from my friends!" Moreover, if commercial advantages are to be had, England will only have her share, which is not likely to be a large one, when France and perhaps others have had a finger in the pie.

Lord Dunsany says, with truth, that the tunnel "would be on the highway of continental and transatlantic traffic," and that, therefore, "we could not be the sole rulers of its destinies." This fact Lord Brabourne admits, but claims as being favourable to his view of the matter. He asserts that whatever it is the common interest of nations to maintain, cannot be made "the means of gratifying the ambition or love of conquest which may at any time be cherished by the individual ruler of a particular country." Again, it will be observed we are asked to wander off to the regions of imagination and theory, with the utmost disregard for facts. If we had never been placed in similar circumstances, we might attach some weight to this assertion. But has there never been any other "highway for nations"? Surely when we are even now putting our hands into our pockets to pay nearly £4,000,000—the only other such thoroughfare that has ever been made—there is no need deliberately to saddle ourselves with another at our very doors! Rather than let it fall into the hands of others, and because it was directly on the road to our Indian possessions, we invested largely in Suez Canal shares. In a pecuniary sense, at least, this has turned out better than even the most sanguine

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expectations: we derive a considerable yearly income, the shares have gone up immensely in value, and we have an acknowledged right to keep its passage free for war ships. In spite of this, we have just had a war to maintain this right: although "a highway for nations," yet, strange to say, the whole brunt of the conflict has fallen upon us! As soon as there appeared a chance of smelling gunpowder, the French fleet, acting on the maxim that "Distance lends enchantment to the scene," was, by the admirable forethought of her Government, prudently removed to a safe distance from Alexandria. Before things reached this pass, everyone knew what interests the French had in the canal, we were continually reminded of it, and thus there was no difficulty about a dual control until the incident just mentioned occurred, when suddenly the scene changes, and to the surprise (?) of the world the co-operation of our allies "is gone like a beautiful dream," not one vestige of it appearing till all hostilities are over; and then our friends, with whom we are now asked to have "friendly intercourse," are heard loudly knocking at the door, as if nothing had happened, and like a set of whining children, vociferously clamouring that things should go on as formerly. It is with these people we are asked to make a closer connection.

Lord Beaconsfield did not make the Suez Canal, but when it was completed he determined to keep it as far as possible in his own hands. Now, however, we are asked to take the initiative, and make another "highway," not to our own possessions, but to the land of a discontented rival who may at any time become, as she often has been, an avowed enemy.

There is one point worthy of notice, *viz.*: both ideas, that of the Suez Canal and the Channel Tunnel, originated on the other side of the water. It has been said, with what truth I know not, that in case the present scheme is found impracticable, another French genius has prepared plans for a bridge—which might appropriately be named the "Bridge of Size"—between Dover and Calais, spanning the English Channel.

We have thus far noticed all the advantages claimed by the promoters of the scheme, *viz.*: That (1) to individuals it would offer increased facilities and conveniences for travelling to and from the Continent; (2) for England it would somehow or other improve her commerce; (3) there would be greater facilities for intercourse between ourselves and the Continent, which would quite pacify France, and instead of being obliged to increase our army and taxes, as Lords Wolseley and Dunsany foolishly imagine, we should be able to lessen both considerably; (4) as it would be a "highway for nations," therefore all who use it would have some share in its management, and thus, although indeed we should not have the full control of our own affairs, there would be this advantage, that there need be no fear lest any special

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claim will be made on us to protect it, for that will be the joint concern of "the nations."

I have endeavoured to show that these are the ideas held by men of too sanguine a turn of mind, based on an artificial standard of human character, for (1) is an inadequate reason considering the interests involved; (2) is more than doubtful; (3) is, on the best authority, likely, if not certain, to prove untrue; and (4) is contrary to the facts which experience teaches us, as has been exemplified by recent affairs in connection with the Suez Canal.

On turning to the other side of the case we receive but little encouragement. Since those best fitted to form an opinion have declared that the proposed scheme would weaken our power of defence, it is not sufficient that doubts be thrown out by way of rejoinder, but such arguments must be clearly refuted. This, after a careful perusal of his article referred to, the candid reader will confess Lord Brabourne has signally failed to do. Let us therefore attend to the warning given.

As I before promised, the well-known arguments of Lords Dunsany and Wolseley as urged by the former in the *Nineteenth Century*, considering the matter from a military point of view shall not be repeated here. Sufficient to remark that both have expressed in the strongest terms an unqualified disapproval of the undertaking. Influenced by the opinion of the latter authority, the Royal Commission lately appointed to enquire into the matter have likewise negatived the scheme. In spite of this we are still importunately asked to give a reluctant consent, and unless we rouse ourselves to an *active* opposition and not merely remain passive onlookers, we shall assuredly read some morning the startling news that a Bill has passed making the proposed plan law, and that, although opposed to the wishes of nine-tenths of Englishmen.

Of course Lord Brabourne is correct when he says, "No great scheme has ever been projected, no new principle brought into play, without exciting the apprehension of those to whom its novelty is unwelcome and who sees therein dangers of the gravest character. This is true, but it is equally true that warnings have often been given which when neglected, results show to have been well founded. If warning had been listened to, we should not have lost the United States. Or, to look nearer home, when to all outward appearance everything seemed quiet in Ireland Lord Beaconsfield, in a letter to the Duke of Marlborough, March 8th, 1880, said, "A danger, scarcely less disastrous than pestilence or famine, hangs over Ireland. . . . a portion of its population is attempting to sever the constitutional tie which unites it to Great Britain." Here was the voice of warning, but the voice of the charmer on the 31st of the same month assured a people, smitten with a temporary attack of mental ophthalmia, that there was "an absence of crime and outrage in Ireland. . . . with a general

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feeling of comfort and satisfaction such as was unknown in the previous history of the country." England preferred to follow the latter advice, and alas! what a result! Similar instances might be multiplied *ad infinitum*, but sufficient will present themselves to the reader's mind.

Lord Brabourne complains that unless the work is completed there will be difficulty in quieting his French partners, and asks, "What excuse can we make?" The natural reply is that we shall give no *excuse* at all, but can supply the very best for our *reason* for our refusal, and if that is not satisfactory, why they must "grin and bear it." As for his threat that by refusing to proceed we shall "give great and just offence to our neighbours and allies," it need only be remembered that of two evils it is best to choose the least.

There is one point on which the Tunnel advocates are strangely unwilling to talk much, *viz.*, its destruction in time of immediate danger. When Lord Brabourne feels obliged to say something reassuring and to promise that due precaution shall be taken, he immediately checks himself and puts his hand before his eyes shuddering at the very thought of such a catastrophe. We are told that "plans can be furnished by which the Tunnel could be destroyed in half-a-dozen ways." But the next sentence contains the comforting reflection that "such a terrible thing as the sudden destruction of a great international work and the loss of human life which would accompany it, are contingencies of which the present state of the world's civilisation would render the occurrence improbable." Just so, supposing that suitable arrangements had been made beforehand, and that any requisite machinery was in working order, who would undertake the responsibility implied in the destruction of millions of pounds worth of property, fearing lest it should afterwards turn out that such a course was not absolutely necessary? What more likely, if not absolutely certain, than that an unscrupulous enemy would provide himself with English prisoners?—who would then be ready to kill, he knows not how many of, his countrymen. Let it not be supposed that such means would only be resorted to by barbarians. Precisely the same thing was done by the Southerners in the American Civil War; and as late as 1870 the polite French themselves must plead guilty to some grave charges. It is, indeed, too commonly asserted that all is fair in war.

Furthermore, we are constantly told that it would be easy to guard the *one* entrance we should have to defend. But as soon as one tunnel is completed it may safely be expected that many others will spring into existence. Even at this early stage of affairs, rival companies have been formed, and of course with each new tunnel comes a fresh source of danger.

It has been truly pointed out that if a tunnel were built it would, in unsettled times, be the cause of a panic. Even if there

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was nothing worse than this to be feared it would be bad enough. A panic does not merely imply, as some imagine, that a certain number of individuals are alarmed and no further result follows. Business men dread it, for trade is materially affected, being often altogether paralysed; the whole country receives a check, which is so much positive loss.

In fine, this is a matter which touches the nation itself, and not only a comparatively small number of speculators; but the public has never been asked for its opinion, nor has any trouble been taken to find out its wishes. Before a treaty is made, before a junction is affected, this should be done.

With great sagacity the promoters of the scheme *appear* to court the fullest investigation, and to give the matter publicity by means of occasional notices in the paper, coolly informing us how far the boring has been carried on, and by invitations to M.P.'s to avail themselves of a special train, a few hours at the sea side, and a good lunch if they will inspect the works. Let us not be lulled into a fancied security by such flimsy devices as these, nor allow matters to drift until retreat becomes impossible. This is a question which must be decided at every election, or we shall when too late, regret our apathy. When taking command of the troops in the late Egyptian campaign, General Wolseley advised his soldiers not to despise their enemies. This is the very mistake into which we must now guard against. Our Parliament is so framed that unless pressure is brought to bear from without, no one need despair of getting the most unreasonable bill passed, even when known to be opposed to the wishes of the majority outside the House. This is the primary danger to be feared. After careful enquiries from various sources, I feel convinced the idea is distasteful to the greater number of Englishmen. But there is reason to fear lest this very fact should prove its own destruction. Lord Salisbury seemed to be uttering a well-worn truism when he lately remarked, "Now-a-days, you have only to agitate long enough, and no matter what you ask, it will be conceded to you."

Instead of letting our rivals and enemies congratulate themselves that we are in their clutches, let us rouse ourselves to meet the exigencies of the case, and by prompt action show that prosperity has not, as so often happens, made us oblivious to danger, and rash enough to tempt fortune; and then they must confess, unwilling though they be, that "England is England still."

E. J. MOERAN.

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PASSING SUMMER.

DARK are the skies, and hoarse and drear
The wind of Autumn sighs.
Come to the woodland and the mere,
And look on one whose end is near,
The Summer as he dies.

Our friend, in his glad youth, was he,
And in his riper day;
We shared the gifts he scattered free—
It were but right and charity
To watch him pass away.

Much good his better times have seen—
Bright skies and sunny hours;
His was the wealth of leafage green,
The rippling corn, the waters' sheen,
And the rich hues of the flowers.

Behold him! Wasted now and old,
That was so fair and brave;
Left lonely on the Autumn wold,
To sink in penury and cold
Into a joyless grave.

Of that broad greenery, once his pride,
To-day remains there none,
Save yon red leaves that down-ward glide,
Like blood-drops ebbing from the side
Of the dying, one by one.

Where are his flowers? No flowers are here.
But rustling seed-stems dry.
Things that like shrunken eld appear,
And shake their palsied limbs and sere
As the chill wind sweeps by.

The morning skies above him bend,
For him the winds are sighing,
Oh! many a weary month must end
Ere we look on half so kind a friend
As the Summer that lies dying!

F. S. P.

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THE THIN RED LINE.

In the compass of these pages, it is impossible to give more than a fleeting glance at the martial state of Europe, during the post-feudal period which may be said to date from the decline of chivalry, and the gradual introduction of mercenary and standing armies, in 1445, to the reign of Francis I. in 1515. During the above epoch the military student will find, however, in the pages of Brantôme, Philip de Commines, Machiavelli, Lanoue, de Rohan, Montecuculi, Father Daniel, Puysegur, Schiller and our own Mahon and Macaulay, the most glorious and instructive chapters, wherein are described great battles, heroic deeds and the art of war. England, France, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, and Sweden, vied with each other in perfecting their military systems, which are fully exemplified in the warlike annals of this eventful period of the world's history. In France, Charles VII. having reconquered his kingdom from the English, profited by experience and gave a more efficient organisation to the national forces. The cavalry first occupied his attention, and, in 1445, he created the *gendarmerie*, known as *Compagnies d'Ordonnance*, caused the abolition of the *Communal Militia*, and the substitution of the body of infantry, called "Franc-Archers." The constitution of this force was not unlike our own local militia, but it was better cared for. The exemption of the Franc-Archer from all taxes was considered, in some degree, as an equivalent to pay, but, in addition, he received, when on service, fifty-six francs a month, which was chargeable to the parish to which he belonged. Louis XI. increased the number of this force to 16,000, divided into four corps of 4,000 men each, and they were again subdivided into eight bands of 500. But the innovation of firearms and the growing importance of the pike caused Louis XI. to see the value of the Swiss, long familiar with the weapon, and the Franc-Archers were replaced, towards the close of that monarch's reign, by 6,000 of these famous Swiss pikemen, who had destroyed his rival, Charles the Bold, 10,000 Frenchmen, trained on the Swiss model and a body of German mercenaries, called *landsknechts*, or sometimes by the Monkish chroniclers, *Filii Belial*, a term of opprobrium subsequently applied to the English cavaliers.

From the reign of Francis I. to the commencement of the Thirty Years' War, and during the religious wars which desolated France, infantry was still in a state of transition, and the pro-

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portion of firearms, which, in the period of Francis, had been about one-third, was increased to one-half. Francis, who had suffered severely from their extortion and avarice, dismissed most of his mercenary troops, and created in their place, seven legions, bearing the name of the province in which each was raised and dividing each legion into six "bands." This organisation corresponded somewhat to the modern system of brigades and battalions, and continued in force till the king's death, in 1547.

From this period, the legion was for a time abolished, and the "band," consisting of 500 to 600 men, became the only permanent unit of organisation, and led, no doubt, to the foundation of the regimental system in France. A captain, aided by a lieutenant, ensign, quartermaster, sergeants, and corporal, commanded the band, which marched to the sound of the fife and the drum. Among the soldiers, some of the oldest and most trustworthy were called *Lanspessades*, a nomenclature derived from the Italian *lanciaspezzata*, or broken lance, a term originally applied to dismounted *gendarmerie* fighting on foot, and these were equivalent, and gave the name, to our modern lance-corporal. Henri II. attempted to restore the legionary formation of Francis, but it was not until the minority of Charles IX. in 1561 that the regimental system was commenced, and still later, in 1569, that the organisation was completed. The number of these regiments increased with the political troubles of the time, and under Henri Quatre and Louis XIII. a great quantity of such corps were placed on the permanent strength of the national forces. Amongst these were also the *corps d'élite*, consisting of the Archers of the Garde (*arquebusiers à cheval*), the Cent Swisses (*chevaux legers de la garde*) (created for Mariè de Medicis), the *Carabins*, *Dragons*, *Gardes Ecossaises*, *Gardes du Cardinal de Richelieu*, dressed in scarlet; *Gardes Françaises*, red; *Gardes du Duc d'Epernon*, *Gendarmes*, *Cuirassiers*, *Cavalerie Legère*, scarlet and blue; *Mousquetaires du Roi*, immortalised in the glowing pages of the elder Dumas, blue; *Gardes du corps du Roi*, scarlet, and the several regiments of artillery and infantry. Under Louis XIV. we find these corps included in the *Maison du Roi*, or Household Troops, and in arms, equipment, and costume, the utmost splendour was theirs. Henri of Navarre, Conde, Turenne, de Rohan, Luxembourg, were in these days the war gods of France, until the evil time came, when Marsin de Coigny, Villeroi, Maillebois and de Noailles, led her armies to defeat (but never disgrace), and up to this time the French Infantry was held in honourable esteem throughout the whole of Europe.

From the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, 1474, to the battle of Rocroi, 1643, and the genius of their "Great Captain," Gonsalvo de Cordova, dawns the first glory of that massive and formidable Spanish infantry, which, like our own Highlanders and Irish regiments, was for a century and a half the terror of every country in Europe. Abstemious, athletic, sober, and hardy, the peasant, the

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muleteer, and the Spanish smuggler, when trained as a soldier, in his own cause, could march and fight with the best troops in the world. The Spaniards were amongst the first to adopt firearms, although they were at the same time renowned for their skill with the cut-and-thrust sword and the dagger. Their arquebuse was an improvement upon the clumsy hand-gun of the Swiss, and later on, in a still more complete form, was called in France a musket. The long series of Moorish wars had accustomed the people to martial deeds, and fostered that spirit of ultra chivalry, which drew forth the ridicule of Cervantes, himself a "Crusader" of Lepanto. The romantic and arrogant courage of the Spaniard did certainly invest the institution of chivalry with an aspect of grotesque punctilio, to which it had never attained in France, and if every Castilian believed that he possessed the spirit of the Cid, it only made him the better and braver soldier.

The Swedish Infantry, the Thirty Years' War, and Gustavus Adolphus will always be associated together, whenever the earlier portion of the seventeenth century is brought upon the *tapis*. Gustavus Adolphus was one of those rarely gifted commanders who so seldom appear in the world's history. Well versed in the language and literature of the ancients, he had formed an intimate acquaintance with the military institutions of the Greeks, Romans, and the peoples whom they had conquered. Adapting the best of these institutions as a model, and endowed with a rare faculty of originality and invention, he created a system of tactics infinitely superior to the one then in use, and which has never since been surpassed. Called on by Europe to defend the Protestant faith, at the head of a small but gallant army, his quick instinct at once detected the kind of enemies with whom he had to deal, and seeing the predilection of the Imperial generals for huge and unwieldy masses of mail-clad pikemen, hemmed in and girt so effectually by musketeers, he devised a pliant and manageable infantry, which, by rapid and yet precise evolutions and a good use of artillery and small arms on the flanks, completely bewildered the slow and awkward Germans. He thoroughly understood the value of extended deployment, when he knew he could depend on his men, and our own "thin line" owes much to his example, copied by Wellington and our own later school.

Inspired by these traditions and trained in the schools of such great masters were the warlike potentates contemporary to William III., while the ambitions of the Grand Monarch, the stolid Dutch tenacity of his rival, the Prince of Orange, and the restless energy of continental sovereigns at this eventful period, found ample employment for the services and experience of the warrior captains, who, after the peace of Westphalia, in 1648, were scattered over the whole of Europe. Some important landmarks may be noted in English military annals during the reign of William of Orange, but not all the genius or sparkle of Macaulay's

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glowing periods can make the Dutch king more than a brave soldier, a good disciplinarian and a marvellously bad general. The army was to His Majesty an expensive toy, which he never ceased to take to pieces, clean, renovate, alter, add to and remodel, greatly to the disgust of the English parliament and the people who had to pay for wars in which they felt no interest, and which diverted English gold and honours into foreign hands.

Standing armies had been declared illegal by Charles II.'s Parliament in 1679, but, nevertheless, were maintained by that monarch and his successors. The Test Act had been passed in 1673, and by its provisions, all officers were to receive the sacrament according to the Church of England, and to take the oaths against transubstantiation, as a safeguard against Papacy. In 1685, however, James II. dispensed with these acts, and placed a number of Roman Catholics in important command. William III.'s first idea and ambition on his accession was to retain his Dutch guards as a nucleus, upon which he could form a powerful English standing army. This request, however, was finally rejected by the Commons in 1699, and from that period we shall find a gradual increase in the regiments of our service. In 1701, the army was increased by Parliament to 30,000 men, and the 35th and 37th regiments were raised. In the following year were formed the 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 36th, 38th and 39th regiments. Payments or gratuities for commissions had been prohibited by William, in 1693, but, under good Queen Anne and the Duke of Marlborough, their purchase and sale were legalised and regulated, and the arrangement was allowed till our own and Mr. Cardwell's time in 1871, when by the issue of a royal warrant, and with scant compensation to those unfortunate officers, who had been forced by law to invest their patrimony in buying their grades, *and in direct opposition to the Parliamentary vote*, purchase in the army was abolished, and thousands of poor men who had purchased their steps were ruined, while others, who, under the new *régime*, had paid nothing, were promoted and pensioned!

The Royal Marines were first separately embodied under William III. and placed on the establishment of the Navy, then, after a time, disbanded, but were finally again raised and formed into six regiments in the time of Queen Anne, being dressed and equipped in scarlet as soldiers of the line. "Half-pay" dates from this reign, and most of the troops were now, 1692, armed with muskets or firelock (flintlock) instead of the old matchlock. The musketeers fired three deep, the front rank kneeling. Grenadiers were used to throw hand-grenades on the flank, and the invention is due to the Spaniards, who first used them at Grenada in 1594, but they were not used in France till 1667. The bayonet, invented first at Bayonne, in 1670, was used with the firelock, but in the form of a long dagger, the handle of which was fixed as a plug into the muzzle. In one of William's many

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campaigns in Flanders, the 25th Regiment suffered severely from this arrangement, as a French regiment advanced against them with fixed bayonets (adjusted in the present fashion), and Colonel Maxwell, the English commander, thinking the enemy were about to charge, ordered his men to screw their bayonets on to the muzzles to receive them, but, to his great surprise, when they came to a proper distance, the French threw in a heavy volley, which for a moment staggered our soldiers, who, however, it is satisfactory to know, recovered themselves, charged, and drove off the enemy. The double-ring bayonet was, notwithstanding this affair, not finally adopted in the English army till many years later.

Macaulay's hero, William III., died, as we all know, on the 8th of March, 1702, and, although the Battle of the Boyne was almost his only actual victory, soldiers at heart must always regard his memory with respect. A strict, and indeed severe disciplinarian, he was also a kind and just commander, while, if somewhat partial to his Dutch troops, he was ever ready to acknowledge and reward the splendid fighting qualities of the English soldiers, who, on so many occasions, had enabled him to retire repulsed but not routed from the field. Our brilliant historian, Macaulay, in allusion to the triumph of mind over matter, and the superiority of civilised genius to the physical brute force of barbaric ages, well describes the weakly and delicate William of Orange and the opposing French general, even less robust in physique, Luxembourg, at the Battle of Neerwinden, or Landen, in 1698. "It is probable that among the hundred and twenty thousand soldiers, who were marshalled round Neerwinden, under all the standards of Western Europe, the two feeblest in body were the hunchbacked dwarf, who urged forward the fiery onset of France, and the asthmatic skeleton who covered the slow retreat of England." The French were victorious, but they had bought their victory dear. More than ten thousand of the best troops of Louis had fallen. Neerwinden was a spectacle at which the oldest soldiers stood aghast. The streets of the village were piled breast high with corpses, and the region renowned as the battlefield of Europe has seen only two more terrible days, the day of Malplaquet and the day of Waterloo.

The splendid halo of military glory which heralded the opening years of Queen Anne's reign, and which raised the name of Marlborough to an equality with that of Hannibal, Cæsar and Alexander the Great, owed much of its lustre to the schooling received by our soldiers, in the long and stubborn campaigns of William III., who, invariably pitted against generals his superiors in military science, never gained an absolute victory and yet never was very badly beaten. Flanders was the training ground where, under the stolid, implacable, silent and brave Dutchman, the "Thin Red Line" of Britain learned to know its real strength, and to see

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that the path to glory and the way to fame is never to recognise defeat. William bequeathed to England a national debt, but he left also to his successor, Queen Anne, the legacy of a magnificent fighting machine, and the materials which, moulded by the practised hand of the great Churchill, made the War of Succession a triumphant and victorious march, while to France, during the closing episodes of Louis XIV.'s long and eventful rule, it brought nothing but disaster upon disaster, as well as exhaustion and ruin to the country.

Reverting to the question before us of military costume, I believe artists will agree with me in considering the French soldier's dress, under Louis XIII. and his son, Le Grand Monarch, as eminently graceful and picturesque, while far more becoming than the costume given to our own troops at the same time. To the armour and buff simplicity of the "soldier of Navarre" succeeded the dazzling wealth of embroidery and trapping of the Richelieu period, when the great Cardinal set the fashion in magnificence and artistic taste in the apparel and equipment of his own two corps of Mousquetaires, mounted and on foot, while the French *noblesse* were, for reasons of policy known only to the astute minister, tempted to ruin themselves in the luxury of their establishments and sartorial embellishment of themselves and their retainers. Let anyone interested in these details refer to the illustrations in the *Costumes Militaires Françaises*, by de Noirmont and de Marbot, and he will see, in the types therein represented, how gay and gallant, how gorgeous and yet harmoniously in keeping, in regard to fashion and colour, were the uniforms of the Household Troops I have elsewhere described. And yet these brilliant butterflies, these dandy and perfumed regiments, whose rank and file held the bluest blood of all the historic chivalry of France, whose simple privates were all gentlemen and nobles of the land, were no *fanéant* cavaliers when the great Condé led them to victory against the terrible Spanish infantry at Rocroi, and when we found them worthiest foemen of our steel when the opposing squadrons charged home at Steenkirk, and showed admiring Europe that the *furia francese* of the French *Gendarmerie*, which so appalled the languid Italians in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was not extinct in the *jeunesse dorée* of a later period.

Louis clothed his troops in a regular uniform in 1670, which at first, however, did not prevent any marked difference to civil costume. Every French gentleman in those days was a soldier or a churchman, while in many cases, as those of Richelieu and de Retz, the two callings were not considered incompatible. Nearly everyone was trained to the use of arms, and the Fronde, like our own civil war, had taught all men the uses of drill and discipline. A scarf, replaced in 1672 by an *aiguillette*, or shoulder-knot, was the only distinction of grade. In England, under William,

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in 1695, many of the foot regiments were clothed in grey coats and breeches, with their drummers in purple, but the Duke of Marlborough changed all this, as he considered the red our national colour, and we find that the infantry soldiers of Queen Anne wore easy-fitting scarlet coats with facings of the distinctive regimental colour, looped up at the sides to give freedom to the legs, a close buttoned, single-breasted cloth waistcoat, coming down to the thighs; breeches of blue, which were nearly concealed by long white gaiters, fastened at the knee by a black strap, and reaching half way up the thigh, with the well-known cocked hat of the period, succeeded afterwards by the conical head dress of cloth with a brass insignia, immortalised by Hogarth in his "March to Finchley." The coat, whose ample skirts could be let down at convenience, and the vest were open at the collar and chest, showing a white cravat and clean shirt, while the cuffs were turned up to leave the wrists free. I have known many officers, who, like myself, consider the Queen Anne military costume far more becoming and useful than our present German abomination, the tunic. A broad buff belt, without the abomination of pipeclay, hanging from left to right, suspended a pouch, and a similar one round the waist, supported a bayonet and a basket-hilted sword. The barrel of the firelock was not browned, and the ring bayonet, introduced in England as late as 1693, was universal in 1705, in the army of Queen Anne, although up to 1690, I find that the old matchlock exercise still retained its place in the infantry manuals of the period. The history of the bayonet as a weapon of war would almost employ a treatise of its own, and its importance may be allowed and estimated when we remember that no troops in the world have ever made of it more terrible use than our own. The weapon is first mentioned in England in a royal warrant of Charles II., dated April 2nd, 1672. It is called a bayonet or "great knive," but is only ordered to be supplied to a certain number of men per troop, of a newly-raised regiment of horse. I have alluded to our soldiers' mishap with this weapon in Flanders, and we know also that at Killicrankie, fought in 1689, the English soldiers had the old-fashioned plug bayonet, and it is thought that the battle was lost in consequence of the slowness of the men in fixing these weapons in the muzzles of their firelocks, the Highlanders thus being enabled to close with, and kill or disable them with the claymore. The best authorities assign the year 1793 as the date when the present ring bayonet was universally used in our army. With the introduction of the bayonet the proportion of pikes in a regiment gradually decreased, until in the time of Marlborough they were finally discarded, although the sergeants retained the halberd, and the officers carried, as well as their swords, a new half-pike or spontoon, seven feet long. The formation was in ranks three deep.

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At this period the armament and formation of infantry were pretty nearly the same throughout Europe, the only difference being the strength numerically of the regiments or battalions. The English regiments of Queen Anne were composed of ten companies, each of 120 men, with about 50 officers. The officers were ranged along the front of the line until the fire was about to be delivered; the line was dressed by the right, having an interval of thirty paces between battalions, while the distances between the ranks at open order was about twelve feet, and at the moment of attack about three feet. Four paces to the rear was formed a supernumerary rank, consisting, as now, of all the spare officers and non-commissioned officers. The colours divided the battalion into two wings, each wing consisting of two divisions, and each division of two *peletons*. At each side of the colours were three files who always reserved their fire. The company, as now, was divided into four sections, and a non-commissioned officer was the flank man of each.

One of the first acts of Queen Anne's reign was, under the advice of the Duke of Marlborough, that of legalising the purchase of commissions, a measure which has been so frequently denounced by those who knew nothing about the subject. The army was then undoubtedly the profession the most honoured and thought of in the kingdom. Not to have served in the Low Countries was to a young fellow of family and fashion, at that time, to be out of the mode, and our commissioned ranks were then, as in France, filled with, and recruited from, the cadets of the best families in the land. I have before me now a family heirloom, an illustrated MS. list, not printed or published, of all the colonels and commanding officers of the royal forces of the kingdom, and a few taken at hazard will give an idea of the quality of our military hierarchy in 1660, and up to 1740. The Gentlemen Pensioners raised in the reign of Henry VIII., 1509, and clothed in scarlet since that time, were commanded, in 1674, by the Earl of Roscommon; while the Yeomen of the Guard had Lord Grandison for their captain. H.M. first troop of Horse Guards, 1660, Lord Gerard, captain; second troop, Sir Philip Howard; third troop, Earl Feversham; fourth troop, Earl Newburgh. This regiment had scarlet uniforms, basket-hilted straight swords and carbines, and wore laced cocked hats. H.M. first troop of Horse Grenadier Guards, in 1693, had Lt.-General Cholmondeley as captain; the second troop was commanded by Lord Forbes—these wore scarlet, with grenadier cap, and were armed with musket, bayonet, and basket-hilted straight sword. The Royal Regiment of Horse Guards, raised and commanded by the Earl of Oxford, 1661, were called "The Oxford Blues," and were dressed in that colour, while armed with carbines, swords, and pistols. The first six regiments of Dragoon Guards and the Third and Fourth Dragoons, now Hussars, were raised in 1685, as were also nine infantry regiments, from 7th

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to 15th inclusive. They were commanded, at the undermentioned dates, as follows. The King's Own Regiment of Horse (1685), afterwards the King's Dragoon Guards (in which I served nine years), Sir John Lanier; The Queen's Regiment of Horse (now Queen's Bays), 1685, Earl Peterborough; The Fourth Regiment of Horse (now Fourth Dragoon Guards), 1685, Earl Plymouth; The Fifth Regiment of Horse (now Fifth Dragoon Guards), 1685, Earl Arran; The Sixth Regiment of Horse (now The Carabineers), 1685, Earl Shrewsbury; The King's Regiment of Carabineers, 1685, Viscount Lumley; The Eighth Regiment of Horse (now Eighth Hussars), 1685, Lord Cavendish; The Royal Regiment of Dragoons (now First Royal Dragoons), 1683, Lord Churchill; The Royal North British Dragoons (now Scots Greys), 1681, General Dalzeil (armed as horse grenadiers); The King's Regiment of Dragoons, 1685, the Duke of Somerset; The Fourth Regiment of Dragoons (now Fourth Hussars), 1685, Earl Fitzharding; The Royal Irish Regiment of Dragoons, 1689, General Wynn; The Sixth Regiment of Dragoons (now Inniskillings), 1688, Sir Albert Cunningham; The Queen's Regiment of Dragoons, 1690, Colonel Cunningham; The Eighth Regiment of Dragoons, 1692, Major-General Cunningham; The Ninth Regiment of Dragoons (now Ninth Lancers), 1715, Major-General Wynn; The Tenth Regiment of Dragoons (now Tenth Hussars), 1715, Brigadier-General Gore (afterwards Earl of Ross, grandson of my ancestor, the friend of Swift, Bishop St. George Ashe); The Eleventh Regiment of Dragoons (now Eleventh Hussars), 1715, General Honeywood; The Twelfth Regiment of Dragoons (now Twelfth Lancers), 1715, Brigadier-General Bowles; The Thirteenth Regiment of Dragoons (now Thirteenth Hussars), 1715, General Menden; and The Fourteenth Regiment of Dragoons (now Fourteenth Hussars), 1715, Brigadier-General Dormer (ancestor of present Lord Dormer). *All these regiments wore scarlet* (*The Royal Horse Guards excepted*), and were uniformly clad and equipped. In the regiments of foot guards and the line from 1660 we shall find as commanders the names of General Monk, Earl Craven, Lord Cadogan, Earl Scarborough, H.R.H. The Duke of Cumberland, Marquis Lothian, Earl Linlithgow, Sir John Hepburn, Earl Orkney, Duke Schombergh, Earls Peterborough, Tiviot, Middleton, Inchiquin, Portmore, Melgrave, Chesterfield, Forfar, Duke of Argyll, Lord Londonderry, Earl Plymouth, Viscount Plymouth, Sir Walter Vane, Prince of Hesse, Lord Dartmouth, Lord Ferrars, Duke of Berwick, Earl Bath, Dukes of Beaufort and Norfolk, and in fact the representatives of all the historical families of the kingdom, who had made arms their profession. All the corps, including the foot guards, and numbered from 1 to 52, were uniformly clad in red, and armed in the manner I have described.

Two years after Anne came to the throne of England the tide of fortune set in, on the 13th of August, 1704, with the battle of

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Blenheim. Here the English and confederates, under the Duke of Marlborough, defeated the French and Bavarians, under Marshal Tallard and the Elector of Bavaria; 12,000 of the enemy were killed and 13,000, amongst whom was Marshal Tallard, were taken prisoners. At this battle Marlborough made splendid use of his cavalry in support of our "Thin Red Line." Ramilies, 1706; Oudenarde, 1708; and Malplaquet, 1709, followed in rapid succession, while, finally, in 1710, the battle of Almenara, in Spain, when the English and German armies, under General Stanhope, defeated the flower of the Spanish infantry, and where the English commander killed the Spanish general, Amezaga, in single combat, a circumstance almost unknown in modern warfare, virtually brought the war of the Spanish Succession to a close, and deprived France of her place at the head of military nations, a place which she never regained till the bloody era of the Revolution. For the brief gleam of triumph that came to her standards at Fontenoy she was indebted to the genius of a foreigner, Maurice, Count of Saxe, the first general in the French service since Turenne who felt the importance of infantry, and to the Irish brigade, which numbered six regiments, under Charles O'Brian, Lord Clare.

The Royal Artillery was raised in the reign of Queen Anne, but not formed under its regimental organisation till the time of George II., and the Queen, under the advice of her great captain, allowed great improvements to be carried out in the organisation and equipment of that branch of the service, hitherto somewhat neglected; while cavalry, the arm which had done so much at Blenheim, was increased in number, and taught according to the latest ideas of tactical efficiency.

The costume of the English soldier of Queen Anne, although not so picturesque as the French, under Louis XIV., was easy, comfortable and sufficiently handsome; the taste of Marlborough and his lieutenants was severely correct and free from extravagance and excess of ornament; uniformity in colour, cut and equipment was universal. All the guards and foot regiments wore comfortable, roomy scarlet coats, blue breeches and long white gaiters. The cavalry were dressed either in scarlet and blue, and great attention was paid to drill and discipline. The consequence was that, in the time of Georges I.-II. there were in the British army fifty of the finest regiments of infantry in Europe, the same that formed "the terrible column" at Fontenoy, who scaled the heights of Abraham, under Wolfe, who, unsupported by cavalry or artillery, defeated Montcalm, under the cannons of Quebec, and who fought so gloriously at Dettingen and Minden. Between the years, 1715 and 1800 the army continued to increase, and the accessions were as follows:—1715, 9th to 14th Light Dragoons; 1717, 40th Regiment; 1719, 41st; 1739, 42nd (Black Watch); 1741, 43rd to 48th; 1743, 49th; 1755, 50th to 60th; 1756, 61st

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to 75th; 1761, Yeomanry, enrolled by Lord Chatham; 1762, 16th Lancers; 1763, 17th Lancers; 1778, Militia embodied (the Militia statutes were passed between 1661 and 1663); 1787, the corps of Royal Engineers, hitherto a civil corps, and 76th and 77th Regiments; 1788, Life Guards; 1794, 90th and 91st; 1796, 92nd; and, in 1800, the 93rd and 95th Rifles (now Rifle Brigade).

From 1714 to 1760, under the rule of George I. and George II., there was no great alteration in the character of military dress, although the equipment and arms of our troops were much improved. The Seven Years' War and our various conflicts in India, under Clive, Coote, Monro, &c., and with the French, Oude, Mahratta powers, and against Hyder Ali, Tippoo still found occupation for our soldiers, while America, Spain, and Holland were opposed to us until the time of the French Revolution. Hats and wigs were the great features of costume during the Georgian era, and the dress of the army was gradually made more ugly, much tighter to the body, and more generally stiff and uncomfortable.

It would be almost impossible, in a sketch of England's "Thin Red Line" to avoid some allusion to the day, when at Fontenoy the French and English infantry stood face to face, and the "terrible column" of the Duke of Cumberland was partly annihilated by the Irish Brigade, in the service of Louis XV. This splendid body of men mustered six regiments, under Charles O'Brien, Lord Clare, and included one commanded by Count Lally, afterwards so celebrated in India. The calm intrepidity of the English advance is mentioned by Voltaire, who describes the majors "laying their canes along the barrels of the firelocks, in order to make the men fire low and straight." "Gentlemen of the French Guards, give fire," cried Charles Hay, a young captain in the English Guards, taking off his hat, and saluting. "We never fire first, fire yourselves, Gentlemen of the English Guards," replied the equally polished and chivalrous representative of France, the Comte d'Anteroche. The English hesitated no longer, and threw in such a terrific volley that the plain was strewn with 600 bodies! Lally, seeing the progress made by Lord John Hay's column, and, indeed, the preparations made for the French king's retreat, told the Duc de Richelieu to turn a battery of guns on the head of the advancing body, while he galloped off to Marshal Saxe, and induced him to order up the Irish Brigade, and launch it against the English flank, *supported* by the regiments of Normandy and Vaisseany. The progress of this immortal column is well told by an Irish bard, an indifferent rebel, but a tolerable poet, Thomas Davis, a "Young Ireland" enthusiast, who hated the "bloody Sassenach" with a fervour which has never been surpassed by Mr. Biggar, Mr. Healy, or Mr. Sexton.

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"Six thousand English veterans in stately column tread,
Their cannon blaze in front and flank, Lord Hay is at their head;
Steady they step a-down the slope—steady they climb the hill;
Steady they load; steady they fire, moving right onward still,
Betwixt the wood and Fontenoy as through a furnace blast,
Through rampart, trench and pallisade, and bullets showering fast;
And on the open plain above they rose, and kept their course,
With ready fire, and grim resolve that mock'd at hostile force;
Past Fontenoy, past Fontenoy, while thinner grow their ranks—
They break, as broke the Zuyder Zee through Holland's ocean banks.
More idly than the summer flies, French tirailleurs rush round;
As stubble to the lava tide French squadrons strew the ground;
Bombshell and grape and round shot tore, still on they marched and fired—
Fast from each volley, grenadier and voltigeur retired.
'Push on my household cavalry,' King Louis madly cried:
To death they rush, but rude their shock, not unavenged they died.
On through the camp the column trod—King Louis turns his rein;
'Not yet, my liege,' Saxe interposed, 'the Irish troops remain!'
And Fontenoy, famed Fontenoy, had been a Waterloo,
Were not these exiles ready then, fresh, vehement and true!"

Louis and the Dauphin rode down to the Irish bivouac and thanked Count Lally for saving him, and George II., when he heard of the English defeat, and the share which the Irish had in it, exclaimed, "Cursed be the penal laws which deprive me of such subjects!" The candid and honest testimony of Marshal Saxe gives a striking illustration of his opinion of the merits of our infantry at this period. He says, in his report to the War Minister, "At Fontenoy, our infantry in the field was broken, while that of the Irish maintained itself. Few generals could hope to sustain themselves, with fifteen or twenty battalions, in the midst of an army, as did the English, without their ranks being shaken, or their fire slackened by our charges of cavalry. These things we have all seen, but our pride makes us avoid discussing them, because we know that we cannot imitate them!"

Epaulettes came in in 1784, and the army was tortured by the custom rigidly enforced of frizzing, plastering and powdering the hair. The officers could afford pomatum, but the unfortunate privates used the end of a tallow candle to prepare their pigtails for the flour-box. When the first regiments of which I have given a list were raised, they were called after the name of their Colonel. In 1755, a light troop was added to each regiment of dragoons, which troop, in the following year, consisted of 100 men and officers. In 1729, the dragoons were really what they were intended for, *i.e.*, mounted infantry, to move, march and manœuvre on horseback, to fight on foot. They wore a shoulder belt for the pouch, a waist belt for the sword, with a place to receive the bayonet, and a sling for the firelock, carbine, or pistol. In 1736 the cloaks of the troopers were faced with the livery of the regiments and the men had all laced cocked hats. In 1763 the light troop was disbanded, and eight men of the six troops of dragoons were equipped as light dragoons and mounted on smaller horses for skirmishing and other light duties. In 1779 the men equipped

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as Light Dragoons of the 1st and 2nd Dragoon Guards and the 4th Dragoons were formed into one regiment and called the 19th Light Dragoons. The two first regiments of Light Dragoons were raised in 1759, and were called by the names of their commanders —they became afterwards the 15th and 16th Light Dragoons, and and are now the 15th Hussars and 16th Lancers, the latter being the only light cavalry or Lancer regiment which wear red. They were first called the King's and Queen's Light Dragoons, and their uniform was, in 1768, a helmet with a horse-hair crest, a scarlet coat with blue lappels, and the sleeves half turned up with blue, the buttons of white metal, two and two, a blue cloth epaulette on each shoulder with a narrow worsted fringe, the waistcoat and breeches white, boots to knee, the cloak scarlet with a blue cape. The trumpeters wore hats with scarlet feathers, and scarlet coats with yellow lace. In 1784 the colour was changed from scarlet to blue, and a jacket substituted for the coat, with collar and cuffs the color of the facings of the regiment. The front of the jacket was faced with white cord, and the breeches were white leather, worn with high boots. The helmet was made lighter; tight leather pantaloons were introduced with Hessian boots and the spur fixed in the heel. The trouser and Wellington boot gradually replaced the breeches during the Peninsula war, a mistake which has only been rectified within the last few years, when breeches and boots are again worn by all mounted men. Any horseman will feel the advantage of this, but the breeches should be quite roomy, and only worn tight *below* the knee. From the death of Queen Anne to the period of The French Revolution every change in our military costume was for the worse, and the climax of ugliness may be said to have arrived during our wars in the Peninsula. The three original English hussar regiments and the 7th, 10th and 15th Hussars were originally Hungarian Militia, furnished by the landowners, and were instituted about 1360. The name is derived from *Huss* twenty, and *ar* price, in allusion to the cost of equipment. They were introduced into the French army in 1692, and iuto the English service as far back as 1759. All Light Dragoons, I need scarcely say, are in England now changed to Hussars. The pelisse part of the Hungarian national hussar dress was originally of sheepskin, and worn suspended over the left shoulder; it looked very well, while it afforded protection against a sword cut, and gave considerable warmth as an over-all jacket. Lancers regiments were formed by Napoleon and raised for his service in Poland. They were not introduced into the English service till the time of the army of occupation after Waterloo in 1815, when four of our smartest cavalry corps were formed as such. These were the 9th, 12th, 16th and 23rd Light Dragoons. They were dressed in the Polish fashion, and with Cossack trousers or overalls.

From 1820 to 1830 the British soldier was severely tortured.

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The finest gentleman in Europe, in proportion as he grew stout, delighted in clothing himself, and setting the fashion to his subjects in the tightest of garments. The consequence was that our unfortunate warriors suffered from this mistaken idea, and the military uniforms of the day were made so tight that the men could hardly wear them. The exquisite "buck," or "dandy," of the period, who is reported to have said to his tailor in ordering his buckskin breeches, "Mind they fit tightly everywhere, if I can get into them, I won't have them," was scarcely a caricature, for it is a well-known fact that the king, when inspecting some lancer uniforms, ordered the regimental tailor to attend, and with a pair of scissors cut away each suspicion of a wrinkle, and to fine draw the seams!

At the coronation of H.M. George IV. the Household Brigade, consisting of the two regiments of Life Guards and the Royal Horse Guards Blue, appeared in bright cuirasses and helmets of steel, with enormous bearskin crests. This was the first time British troops had worn cuirasses since 1794, when they were given to some regiments of cavalry serving in Germany and the Netherlands, but, finding them more cumbersome than convenient, they were deposited in store, and never used again until the pageant in question. William IV., being a sailor, had practical ideas, and although he did not bother the army with many changes, he took great interest in military display and dress. His Majesty, however, if alive now would not be in favour I believe of changing our national colour, as he was of opinion that *all the* army, with the exception of Artillerymen and Riflemen, should be dressed in the traditionary and hereditary colour of our forefathers; consequently all cavalry in the service, except the Hussars, were ordered in this reign to wear scarlet, and the line regiments to wear gold lace, while silver was given to the Militia. Red instead of white facings were given to the navy.

I have now almost finished my task, having arrived at the present period, and the reign of our Most Gracious Majesty, than whom no English monarch has ever been more identified or in sympathy with the soldiers who guard her throne. As I joined the service in 1853, my personal experiences only go back thirty years, but even in that time I have seen constant changes and worn many uniforms in various climates and different quarters of the globe. Soon after Her Majesty came to the throne, the original dress, greatly to the delight of our sailors, was restored to the Navy, and the blue and white of St. Vincent, the Nile and Trafalgar again recall the glorious deeds of the past. Light dragoons also recovered the dress in which they had so long served, and, with the exception of one gallant corps, the 16th Lancers, all were given back their blue coats.

This retention of the scarlet in the 16th Queen's Lancers was, of course, a distinctive mark of Her Majesty's royal favour, and no

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regiment better deserved such honour. The corps, as I have said, dates from 1759, and has been employed in active service out of England for more than fifty years—in Portugal, in America, in Flanders, throughout the Peninsula War, at the battle of Waterloo, the siege and capture of Bhurtpore, in the first invasion of Afghanistan, in the bloody battles of the Sutledj, and again in India in 1866 until 1877, with increasing honour and unvarying prestige. They, indeed, as I know well, are justly proud of the colour they wear!

The easy-fitting, square-cut coat with lappels and skirts looped up at the sides, of Queen Anne, with long waistcoat, breeches, and gaiters, was a sensible and useful costume of its kind, but in every succeeding reign it was cut down, shortened, and tightened until it became the coatee worn until after the Crimean War, when we were put into a double-breasted tunic, which was, however, soon changed to the present garment, which is neither a coat, jacket, or vest, not having the warmth of the first nor the freedom of the others. Let us hope that the hideous and ill-omened garment is doomed. It never looked well *en grande* or *petite tenue*, at mess, levee, parade, or ball, and on service was rarely worn. At the Cape of Good Hope that splendid and popular commander and excellent sportsman, Sir John Michel (lately commanding-in-chief in Ireland), was the first to introduce the scarlet patrol jacket, which we wore with the regimental facings, and with a long blue waistcoat. On foot or mounted it was equally comfortable, and most South African hunters now wear cord or leather jackets, somewhat similar in pattern.

The first appearance of Prussia as a military power dates from the reign of the Great Elector, Frederick William, in 1640. This prince, the nephew of Gustavus Adolphus, inherited from his father the first standing army established in Prussia, which at first numbered only 6,000 men; but at the time of the Great Elector's death it had increased to 28,500. Under the son of the Great Elector, who, in 1701, became the first king of Prussia, with the name of Frederick I., the army was generally hired out to any of his allies who could subsidise him for its loan; and under such conditions it made the campaigns of Italy, Germany, and the Low Countries, under Marlborough and Eugene.

The second king of Prussia was a brute, a miser, and a martinet. George II. always called him "My brother the Sergeant." To have the best drilled army and the best filled exchequer was the extent of his ambition; and, in the former, he succeeded so well that Macaulay says: "The household regiments of Versailles and St. James', placed beside his, would have appeared an awkward squad." Although the main object of Frederick William's reign was to create the finest army in Europe, he was the most pacific of monarchs, and he was never ambitious of seeing the gloss taken off his parade soldiers by the rude contact of war. At his death

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he left an army of 76,000 men and a treasure of £3,200,000 for the benefit of his son and successor, the Great Frederick, whose Prussian infantry, remodelled and perfected, became the pattern for all other nations.

The "Prussomania," as it was called, took nowhere such a firm root as in France; but it was an error which Napoleon and his school were the first to see, as in the military organisation of a country, the first care should be to study the idiosyncracy of the people; and the result was soon shown, as the tactics of Frederick and the German discipline of the cane were diametrically opposed to the French national character. In 1775 the indiscipline and disorganisation of the French army was such that Louis XVI., by the advice of his minister, Turgot, appointed the Count of St. Germain war minister; but his *régime* was unpopular and disastrous to the force. The feeling of insubordination and discontent was such that the French Guards were the first regiments to fraternise with the people at the outbreak of the Revolution.

But from 1792 dates a new era in the military history of the French people, and the proclamation of the Republic, the battle of Valma, and the magical appeal of "Citizens, the country is in danger," soon saw a nation in arms, and to Carnot, who, according to Napoleon, was the most honest man of the Revolution, is due the merit of having "organised victory out of this wild and truculent mass of revolutionists."

Returning to our own "Thin Red Line," and the wars into which England was precipitated by the upheaval of monarchy in France, the student of military history will find in the glowing pages of Gleig, our late popular Chaplain-General, Alison, Napier, and Creasy, a succession of military and naval episodes, such as no other nation, since the Macedonian or Roman period, can boast. It is true indeed that our war ministers and commanders-in-chief were then, as now, at the outbreak of hostilities, rarely prepared; and from the days of General Seymour Conway, in 1782, to those of the Duke of Cambridge, in 1883, our little army has had to do the work of a machine, four or six times its size. England, the richest nation in the world, is the most grudging in military expenditure, and the most niggardly when commencing a campaign! Our war with America, in 1774, found us unready and unprovided; that with France, in 1778, saw us in the same condition; while, at the openings of the campaigns against Spain, in 1780; Holland, the same year; France (Revolutionary), 1793; Denmark, 1801; France, under Bonaparte, 1803; the Dutch at the Cape, 1806; Turkey, 1807; in the Peninsular, 1808; America, 1812; and in our subsequent conflicts in Burmah, 1824; Ashanti, 1826; Turkey, 1827; the Cape, 1828; Afghanistan, 1838; China, 1839; Scinde, 1843; Punjab, 1845; against the Kaffirs, 1846; Russia, 1854; China, 1856; at the Indian

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Mutiny, 1857; China, 1860; New Zealand, 1863; Ashanti, 1863; Abyssinia, 1867; Ashanti, 1873; Afghanistan, 1878; Zululand, 1879; against the Boers, 1881; and in Egypt, 1882, we have been *en l'air*, with confusion and excitement, in finding, organising and placing the most moderate force ready to march or embark.

Still Bangalore, Pondicherry, Lincelles, Tournay, Martinique, Guadaloupe, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Dominica, Grenada, Tobago, Trincomalee, were successively taken, Seringapatam was stormed, Malta, the Cape of Good Hope, Monte Video, and Copenhagen fell to our soldiers and sailors; and, from the disembarkation of Sir Arthur Wellesley, at Mordego Bay, in 1808, to Roleia, Vimeira Corunna, the Douro, Talavera, Amboyna, Busaco, Barossa, Fuentez d'Onor, Albuera, Almarez, Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajoz, Salamanca, Vittoria, San Sebastian, the Biddassoa, Nivelle, Nive, Orthes, Thoulouse, Bladensburg, Ceylon, Quatre Bras, and Waterloo, England saw our "Thin Red Line" under such leaders as Clive, Coote, Wellesley, Hill, Beresford, Picton, Graham, Stewart (Londonderry), Combermere, Ross (of Bladensburg), Clarke, Hector Munro, Mackinnon, Crawford, Moore, Cameron, Dundas, Colborne, Anson, Barnard, Somerset, Ponsonby, Uxbridge, Byng, Dalhousie, David Baird, Paget, Le Marchant, Harris, win its way, under the fiercest blaze of battle, and the light of victory, against the finest troops, picked from every quarter of the globe.

All these traditions, these hallowed memories, are they to be for ever thrown aside. Forbid it, shades of the mighty dead, whose names in every English camp and barrack-room are, indeed, household words! In spite of all that the iconoclast may say or do, sentiment and sympathy, tradition and feeling, are largely represented in the soldier's nature; and although discipline may be and is essential to his well-being and success as a fighting machine, his own private instincts and even prejudices must never be ignored. Those instincts, sympathies, traditions and memories of past glory are, with our rank and file, even more than with the hierarchy of our army, indissolubly associated and bound up with the colour and the cloth of the glorious lists of British battles, from Hastings to the Alma; and I speak advisedly when I venture to say that the majestic advance of our troops up the terrible slopes of the last named field of our "Thin Red Line," so vividly and picturesquely painted by William Russel and Kinglake, owed much of its success to the imposing aspect of our battalions, as they moved on in their red and solid continuity against the grey and sullen masses of inert Muskovites, who reeled like some wounded monster, as our levelled tubes of "brown bess" belched forth their sheets of lead and flame.

In the "standing orders" of my first corps, the 85th King's Light Infantry (of which I was adjutant for five years), and printed for Sir Gaspard Le Marchant, then commanding, the first thing impressed upon the recruit was "obedience," the next, smartness of

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appearance. "Every private in the 85th is a gentleman in right of the cloth he wears," was, I remember, one of the first aphorisms in this manual of guidance, and, acting on this principle, I may venture to say that we never allowed a sloven to remain in the regiment, a corps whose appearance and conduct won golden opinions wherever we went. I hope I may be excused for speaking somewhat *ex-cathedra* in owning to some pride in the fact of belonging to a military stock and race; and when I say that my earliest recollections go back to old pictures of those of my name, from the half-armoured soldier of the days of Charles I. to the powdered and pig-tailed warrior of subsequent generations, all of whom wore either the good old buff or the scarlet which is now threatened. To the mind of a soldier, who has any reverence for the past, it must seem as fatal to our *prestige* and *esprit de corps* (two factors most important in winning battles) to change our national red uniform as it would be to abolish the "Union Jack," and substitute a grey flag.

Having had some considerable experience in recruiting, when in command of various depôts, both of cavalry and infantry, I can speak with some authority as to the advantages of a smart and attractive uniform, such as worn by both my own regiments, a crack light infantry as well as a time-honoured heavy cavalry corps, and I maintain that, as long as our English army is recruited, manned and renewed by voluntary enlistment, a handsome, showy dress will be a *sine qua non*. Imagine the feelings of such a distinguished regiment as the 16th Lancers if the order went forth to confiscate their red jackets! Picture to yourselves, ye Sartorial reformers, the effect of taking away the words "Guards," "Rifles," "Light Infantry," "Fusiliers," "Dragoon Guards," "King's," "Royals," "Queen's," or any of those cherished and time-honoured distinctions which seem so insignificant to the civilian, but which are so dear and treasured to the true soldier!

In regard to the increased danger under fire to which our "Thin Red Line" is exposed by reason of improved arms of precision, I must venture to maintain that, in spite of new theories, battles will be won now as of yore by the bayonet and the sword, as well as by the fire of artillery and musketry. If Lord Chelmsford had been in command at Isandula he would have formed square and forestalled Ulundi; if Evelyn Wood had been on the Majuba, the Boers would never have got to the top; had Roberts been the general at Maiwand, Ayoub would never have broken the ranks of the "old Berkshires," and if Lord Wolseley had opened the ball at Tel-el-Kebir with a duel of musketry, instead of the "cold steel," our losses would have been heavy. There are times when the "cold iron," Picton's favourite attack, will alone win the day, and then colour or uniform goes for little or nothing. Our soldiers, I have endeavoured to show, have won glory in all ages and in all climes, clad in our truly national and popular

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colour, and it would, in the opinion of the most experienced and competent judges, be an act of wanton imprudence to take the colour away, as it is their hereditary and recognised uniform. But, as our garrisons and duties call us to climates and countries as various as night to day or as summer to winter, we have for years seen the necessity of providing "Thomas Atkins" with a suitable working and fighting dress. At the Cape the 74th looked and fought well, clad in mimosa-dyed patrol jackets; while fur and flannel are necessary, and in India and Mauritius I have worn white linen. Sheepskin and furs, flannels and leather, knickerbockers and leggings, trousers or gaiters are chosen by the tourist and sportsman, according to the variations of dry or wet, or hot or cold weather, and on service we cannot do better than to assimilate our soldiers' dress to the necessities and exigencies of the *locale*, while we leave him his *grande tenue* so dear to the old campaigner, as well as the young recruit, for the pride, pomp, and circumstance of show and parade.

In regard to the dress of the future, I would, while retaining the scarlet or blue, as the case may be, for full dress, give the infantry soldier a *coat*, not a tunic, double-breasted, with lappels, and skirts, to turn back or not, as occasion required; a long waistcoat, the colour of his regimental facings, knickerbockers and leggings, and a stout cloth helmet with regimental badge and number. This dress, with a little lace, could be made to look very handsome, and with a patrol jacket of any neutral tint for camp, fatigue duties, and rough work, need not increase the present kit. A grey overcoat, somewhat of the present cut, but of better material, would be, in many climates, as good and unconspicuous fighting dress as any other, and the Russians know this fact. For cavalry, the present hussar tunic or home artillery jacket, with a patrol jacket, cannot well be improved, but the sword-belt should invariably be worn under the skirt. All officers' swords should be straight, and the owners should be taught how to use them. I do not agree with Lord Wolseley that the sword is, or ever will be, an obsolete weapon. I must not forget that battles are won now, as of yore, by the legs as well as by the arms, and the soldier should always be well shod. I speak as a sportsman, as well as a soldier, when I say that the best devised boot for infantry is that called the "Hyth Boot," invented by one of our officer instructors of musketry. It has a hinge in the outer sole, and two straps worn after the manner of sandals. With slight modification it could also be adapted for cavalry, as there are occasions, when the latter must dismount and fight on foot.

Finally, there are as good fish in the sea as ever came therefrom. Enlist Irish as well as Scotch regiments, but for seven, fourteen, and twenty-one years. Abolish the present faulty and vexatious system of reserves, and make the Militia the only army reserve, all service to commence and end in this branch of our "Thin Red

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Line." Enlist lads as boy soldiers or army apprentices, with the option of staying on for seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years, with pension according to service, and don't drive a man forth from the ranks just as he knows his work, to be a loafer or a burden to his parish, but at the end of his time, let him know that, in addition to his pension, he will have the preference in obtaining government employment. Let us not forget that the regimental officer whom the rank and file know and respect should not be shifted just as he has his company, troop, or battalion in good order. Let examinations be qualifying, not competitive, and do not offer a premium, as now, to cramming and incompetence. Majuba, and the death of the Prince Imperial, have shown us the value of science and staff college. The "Thin Red Line" has fought and conquered for ten centuries, under its own monarchical traditions, and officered by English gentlemen, who were more familiar with rod and gun, with pigskin and willow, and with field, forest, and flood, than with conic sections or Kriegspiel; and if Tommy Atkins was satisfied in the old days to fight "under the cold shade of aristocracy" let us candidly admit that, as a rule, he fought well and bravely. The reason of this was that the British soldier was proud of his "dandy officer," who was *bene natus, bene vestitus*, although, I allow, sometimes *moderate doctus*, and proud of his own appearance. No man can be expected to take pride in himself if clad in an ugly dress, but well and becomingly attired, in a soldierlike garb, his motto will be *Virtute nihil obstat in armis.* Let us above all remember that our next war may not be against wretched Fellaheen, but against Europeans, where we shall find generals of a different calibre to that of poor Arabi!

WALLER ASHE.

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THE TWO GRENADIERS.

(FROM HEINE.)

HOMEWARDS two Grenadiers to France
From Russian prisons came;
As they drew nigh to Germany
They bowed their heads with shame—
They bowed their heads with shame.

There heard they first the tidings dread,
Glory has France forsaken,
Scattered and fled her mighty host,
And e'en the Emperor taken—
Even the Emperor taken.

Then wept together the Grenadiers
Wept at the tale of rue;
Out spake the one, "Ah, woe is me,
My old wounds bleed anew—
My old wounds bleed anew."

The other spake, "The song is sung,
I too would with thee perish,
But wife and child have I at home
Whom none but I can cherish—
Whom none but I can cherish."

"What reck I wife, what reck I child?
By mightier thoughts I'm shaken,
If they are hungry let them beg,
My Emperor is taken—
My Emperor is taken.

"Yet grant me brother one request:
If I must surely die,
Take thou my corpse to France with thee,
In French earth let me lie—
In French earth let me lie.

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"The honour-cross with ribbon red
Be on my bosom laid,
Put thou my musket in my hand
And gird me on my blade—
And gird me on my blade.

"So will I lie and listen still
Sentry among the dead,
Until I hear the cannon roar
And neighing chargers tread—
And neighing chargers tread.

"'Tis he! my Emperor, o'er me rides!
The sabres clang and wave—
Armed spring I up from out the ground
My Emperor to save—
My Emperor to save."

R. H. M. E.

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TIME.

SEPTEMBER, 1883.

A REAL QUEEN.

CHAPTER XII.

Round somewhere rolls the sun's red ball,
  The frozen poles sway round the sun:
Dame Earth spins round her poles, while all
  Round Her we mortals run.

So maze-wise whirls the race of feet,
  Of orbs, souls, planets, I, and You—
The marvel's not we never meet,
  But how we ever do.

OSWALD HARGRAVE thought that Silver Moldwarp would lead him to Lawrence Derwent.

Silver Moldwarp was sure that Oswald Hargrave would lead him circuitously to Lawrence Derwent.

The straight man believed that the crooked man would lead straight: the crooked man, that the straight man would lead crooked. But this was the only difference between them. Each believed himself to be tracking the other: and neither could guess that the other was tracking him.

Such misunderstandings happen often enough where, with the world for their hunting-ground, two lives go chasing one another up and down, and do not meet only because neither of them stands still. But when the game is played, in the most bald and matter-of-fact manner, in the streets of London, it must needs grow bewildering. Consider the problem. Oswald goes in advance, meaning to turn round presently and follow Moldwarp. But Moldwarp is following *him*. And so they are to all intents and purposes moving in a circle, wherein, as a child may see, to speak of leading and following reduces the problem *ad absurdum*.

For Moldwarp of course it was the plainest sailing, because to

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all appearance Oswald was the guide, and he could not guess that the seeming guide was only shamming. But Oswald soon grew puzzled. He passed two or three turnings—there are any number of them in that part of London—and sauntered down the next. The chances were that Moldwarp would pass it: and he could then retrace his steps and put himself behind his pursuer. But Moldwarp took the same turning too, still following.

That might however be accidental, his taking the identical turning down which Moldwarp had intended to go. However, the next experiment of the same kind could hardly fail. So he repeated the stratagem—only to find, on turning his head just enough to confirm the suspicion of his ears, that the other was after him still.

However, the theory of coincidence is not exhausted by two cases. Oswald tried a third, this time plunging into a court which forbade the idea of its being chosen without a motive. So quickly and so suddenly did he contrive to disappear, aided by the intervention of some men loading a cart between him and his pursuer, that this time Moldwarp actually shot past the entrance to the court, imagining that his guide was holding straight on. Oswald emerged again, at last having reversed the order. But presently Moldwarp began to waver, and then stopped.

Thought Oswald, "Has he lost himself or his way?"

And it seemed as if he were right: for Moldwarp, after looking to the right and to the left, before and behind, up and down, retraced his steps and came back to the entrance of the court again. Moldwarp passed him so closely that the two men might almost have touched, had they pleased. Oswald counted ten, very slowly, and then stepped out of the dark entrance to follow once more.

"If he guessed I was following, and was trying to baffle me, he has lost me at last," thought he. However, he took the precaution of crossing the street, so that his pursuing footsteps might tell no more tales.

But suddenly Moldwarp vanished: and was seen no more.

It was not down a turning: for just at that point there was none. Nor was it into air, for the man had no wings, nor under the earth, for his time was not yet come. Oswald could only clench his teeth, and his fists at having been so completely balked by this eel in gold spectacles. "He *did* know I was following him, confound him!" he swore, in somewhat stronger language, half aloud. "I'm no use at this sort of game. At this, only? No—at none: *I*, to think I can track the ghost of a girl over the world when I let a substantial knave like that vanish before my very eyes. Aye, and let him know that he has tricked me—that a common rogue like this should know what I would give the rest of my life to know, and that I cannot lay hands on him except to strangle the secret with the man . . . . . I suppose I am beaten,

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now: beaten and shamed. I may as well go back and hoe my turnips: or, if I find I'm not fit even for that, take to shying stones into the sea. Anyhow, that will be more useful than shying myself into Nowhere. Poor Sophy, though—we mustn't part bad friends. After all, it's not for me to see motes in eyes—a girl has a right to be foolish: but what business has a man to Fail?"

He walked on slowly till he found a cab: and then desperate at last of ever learning, much less of avenging, Rosamond's mysterious fate, he had himself driven straight to the very house in which she was dwelling, and where he had left her not much more than an hour ago. If he had only known—but If is If: that history whereto all the chronicles of all the ages are less than a grain of sand. Think of all that never has been, is not, cannot be, and never will be: what, beside such a boundless ocean, is all the history of the earth, past, present, and to come, but less than a grain of sand? Yet If contains it all—and more. Chaos itself was a universal If—Light the transmutation of If I be into I am.

It seemed as if Silver Moldwarp, on the contrary, had been transmuted from a very real I am into something less than If I be. But it was not so. As fully persuaded as Oswald that his attempt to follow had been discovered and that the other's leading was a deliberate misleading, he effaced himself by the simple means of vanishing, not into nothingness, but only into the warehouse in front of which the cart was loading. Why did not Oswald guess such an obvious cause for vanishing? As to that—*Tu quoque.* You, who ask the question, also saw those men and that warehouse but a minute ago, and had a better chance to remember it than a man whose whole life had been a training in the art of looking a long way off for things that lay close at hand. Besides, from his point of view, Moldwarp had no reason for such a method of disappearing; and it is not so easy to know what happens in the quietest of back streets unless one is told. Try your best to keep your eye upon any chosen passenger in any thoroughfare: and if he does not in ten minutes vanish in the manner of Moldwarp, you are a born detective, and should instantly apply for a place in Scotland Yard.

For such a place Silver Moldwarp should have applied: for, instead of falling out of the chase, he left the warehouse with a hasty apology for having intruded by mistake, and was in time to see Oswald hail the cab, though, strain his ears as he might, he could not catch the address given to the driver. "Hanged if *I* aren't done!" thought he. But Fortune favoured him: and before the cab was out of the street, another came into sight empty. "Follow that," said Moldwarp: "he knows where to go."

It was all plain sailing now: and Moldwarp had every reason to believe that he was being conducted straight to the man of whose whereabouts his guide knew as little as he. Or if not straight, at any rate by a road that would lead to Lawrence Derwent in time.

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For in one thing the manufacturer of antiquities was no impostor. He had an honest, genuine faith in his own Instinct, which was his more modest word for genius: and, though he now and then took the name of Instinct in vain, it was always for cause, and not because he in the least confounded it with reason, which he honestly despised, though he did not know it by name. It was instinct, he would have said, that led him to the conclusion, at first sight, that Æneas Fane was a bundle of golden feathers made for nimble fingers to pluck till not one remained. Instinct, in the matter of books or pebbles, had enabled those nimble fingers of his to work out hints that he had not learning enough to understand. Instinct, he would have said again, told him that a man like Oswald would not be engaged in trying to dodge and baffle him about the streets except to keep him from finding something or somebody that he wished to find and the other to conceal. Of course there was a dash of reason in this, as there must be in all operations of even the least imperfect specimens of the human mind: but still there was little of the dash as might be: and only Instinct, barely diluted, could have told him that wherever Lawrence Derwent was to the knowledge of Oswald, there Oswald himself would be in no long time.

"Don't I mind how he tried to hunt the poor beggar down!" thought he, in his half audible way, as he drove along. "And all because he had been in gaol for breaking a law. If 'twas for breaking his own head, 'twould be cause enough: but what's a law? Even if 'tis broken, 'tis no more damaged than if you'd broke a stream of water out of a tap—on it goes. Young Hargrave's a bull-dog, and no mistake—wanting to get a poor devil that never hurt him nor his Lowmoor'd again after all these years. But fancy his going to old Rackstraw to join him in thief-catching—as a family matter! That's a game and a half—Never mind: 'twas a good instinc', that he came when I was by. Holloa—I suppose we're there. . . . . Stop, I say! I'll get down here."

He had seen, from the window, the first cab stop at a certain door in a certain street in a very different neighbourhood from that in which the chase had begun. Moldwarp, while several doors behind, stopped the cab, and got out heavily and slowly, so as to give Oswald time to knock and enter before he exposed himself again to the public view. Oswald once within the house, he strolled towards the door to note the number. He had reached the first of its area railings, when the door opened, and a gentleman—not Oswald—emerged therefrom, came face to face with him for a moment, stared at him mechanically, and passed on: a tall, large built man, with a great brown beard.

"Now bless my mortal soul!" gasped Moldwarp. "Instinc's an awful thing! That's the man!"

Instinct—if Silver Moldwarp was right now—had been justified

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indeed of her favourite child. He had followed Oswald, believing that Oswald knew. Oswald did not know: and yet he had led more straightly than he could have gone even if he had known. It was as if a lost wanderer had been guided by Will o' the Wisp straight home.

Moldwarp turned, and brought himself abreast with the man from Nevada.

"Pardon, sir," said he. "Might I say a word?"

The rule for prudent conduct in the streets of London has been laid down thus—walk quick: and if anybody speaks to you, knock him down. There was, however, no apparent reason for committing sudden battery upon this elderly person in gold spectacles: and the man from Nevada, though he did not slacken his stride, only answered, in his most exotic twang,

"This is a free country, sir, Twenty if you please. Only, to save time, don't ask for money—"

"Oh no, sir! I'm not one o' them sort. Silver Moldwarp's *my* name."

"Oh, a capital name, *too*—the first particularly."

"And I think we have a mutual friend—Rackstraw by name."

"Eh?"

"Hermon Rackstraw."

"I thank you, sir," said the man from Nevada, stiffly, with his twang intensified. "You wish to speak on some matter of business, I con—clude?"

"Yes, Mr. Lawrence Derwent, I do."

"I am afraid you are under some mistake," said the man from Nevada. "I am acquainted with Mr. Rackstraw: but my name is Harding: not—what name did you say?"

For a moment, his coolness staggered Moldwarp. But—

"Lawrence Derwent was the name I said," said he. "And Lawrence Derwent is the name I say. Lawrence Derwent that was in Lowmoor gaol for felony, and escaped nigh a dozen year ago."

"Oh—you are a detective, I suppose? All I can say is that I'm very sorry you've been wasting valuable time. Well—you're only doing your duty: and it doesn't matter. I'm in no sort of hurry. It will amuse me to prove that I am not an escaped convict, and I shall learn something about your police system over here. So, Mr. Moldwarp, till you learn your error, I am entirely in your hands."

"My Eye, Mister—but you *are* cool! If I didn't put faith in Instinc'—But I do. You're Lawrence Derwent, out of Lowmoor: ten or twelve years older, and grown a beard. And bless you, if I was to hold up my hand to that peeler over there, into Lowmoor you'd be again. I'm no detective—I'm not one of them sort, not I."

"Policeman!" called the man from Nevada: not loudly, but quite loud enough to be heard. "Make this man scarce—he

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is annoying me. He insists upon it that I am somebody else—drunk, I suppose. Here is my card"— and he held out a half-crown.

"Come, sir," said the constable, "this won't do you know—annoying a gentleman in this sort of way. You can go on, sir: I'll see to the other gent—"

"Now if here isn't a fuss over a mistake!" said Moldwarp. "I was only telling this gent there were some friends asking after him he'd be pleased to meet, and have heard he's back from foreign parts—and he cuts up as rough as a bear. You mind your beat, my man, and let a pair of old friends have out their bit of a breeze in their own way."

The constable smiled, shook his head, and passed on, seeing no cause to interfere, in what seemed to be the mildest and most meaningless quarrel between respectable people in which he had ever been professionally engaged. He looked back once or twice, on the chance of a second summons: but only saw the two gentlemen walking side by side.

"I'd advise you not to do that again, Mr. Derwent," said Moldwarp, "that's all."

"Do what again? Show an intrusive blockhead who threatens me with the police that I mean to look to them for protection? Be off, whoever you are: or the next constable we meet shall take me on the charge of thrashing a blundering, meddlesome fellow whom I don't know from Adam half as much as he deserves."

"Eh—thrash *me?* You've done that, Squire: and once is enough o' that: my bones have never been the same, to this day. As if *I* could forget *you!* Lord, if I don't feel your knuckles in my wind-pipe still. Have you forgot Pix Knoll, Crossmarsh, by Lowmoor? Then so haven't I! Ah, you're older—and you're bigger—and you're hairier. But I go by the Eyes. Look into a man's eyes as I've looked into yours, and you'll never forget him. There's no two men's eyes alike: and they never change, don't eyes: leastwise the something in 'em don't, that differs man from man . . . . . Ah, and I know you're here: and old Rackstraw knows you're here: and young Oswald Hargrave knows you're here: and here's the only friend you've got going to be thrashed for his pains . . . . . Well, there. I scorn malice: it don't pay . . . . . So what'll you stand if I put you up to doing old Rackstraw an ill turn?"

The man from Nevada strode on in silence for one moment—no more. Then he said:

"Well, one mustn't be angry with a mistake. It's not very flattering to be mistaken for an escaped convict—however, out where I come from, I've known ex-gaolbirds who were very decent fellows indeed. It's a bit of an adventure: and adventures aren't too common in this dead-alive old London of yours not to be welcome. You're quite sure my name's Derwent, eh?"

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"Lawrence Derwent. Sure? So are you."

"You've got pluck, old gentleman, to recognise a man who would prefer to keep dark, I con—clude. Is he a desperate character—this Lawrence Derwent of yours? Now look here, old gentleman. All this amuses me. I'm going to test your faith. You say your friend Derwent, who nearly throttled you, would like to do old Rackstraw an ill turn. I'm Harding, Rackstraw's friend, bound to report to him any plots I hear against his pocket, person, or good name. But if you have faith in your fancy more than in my word, you'll risk that, and tell me what bad turn you want to give me something to do."

"All right! You tell me what Lawrence Derwent would give to know that old Rackstraw ought to be in Lowmoor instead of he? The ungrateful old varmin—"

"I don't know. But I know I'd give five hundred dollars—a hundred pounds any day, to see the apostle of Christian civilisation on the wheel. He'd know what civilisation means then. By old Harry, 'twould be as good as a play."

"Now you tell me what Lawrence Derwent would give to the man whose instinc' tells him where to lay hand on the will old Rackstraw swore he never witnessed—eh?"

"Good God!" exclaimed the man from Nevada, in a deep, full, English voice, suddenly stopping and facing the other full. "Speak out, man—if this is a trap—"

"You've hit it now, Master Lawrence. Trap's the word," said the fox to the lion. "I've got you under my thumb—Instinc's a grand thing! Because, you see, if you don't come down what's fitting, into gaol you go, and what I've said of a will have been but a bit of a lie like what any honest man may use to catch a thief: and there you are."

"I see. Then let me tell you, to begin with, that I am safer from gaol than you," said the man from Nevada, recovering his drawl. "All this was beginning to amuse me: but the best of comedies won't stand being too long. All the same, I should like to hear the end of the story. I've a bit of business first: perhaps you won't mind coming round with me while I do it, and then we can go somewhere and have the rest out comfortably by ourselves?"

"Mind. Not I. I mean sticking by you, governor, till this job's done."

"You're not afraid of trusting yourself alone in a cab with an escaped convict, who would probably prefer taking your life to losing his own liberty, and maybe knows how? You say I strangled you once before. Are you game to run the risk again?"

"Oh, I aren't afraid this time. If you strangle me, you'll strangle what you'd be sorry for, if you ever came to know."

"So far so good then. Hansom—Mildew Court, City. In with you, old gentleman. Time's money, you know."

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"Mildew Court!" stammered Moldwarp: for once taken aback, and amazed.

"Why not? Now hold your tongue, please. I can't talk in cabs: and I've got a bit of business on my mind."

They reached Mildew Court: and the man from Nevada, having dismissed the cab, went straight for the staircase of the Agency General of the Goblin Islands. Nor only so: he went to the very landing of the same company, and knocked at their very door.

"Bless your soul alive, man!" exclaimed Moldwarp, clutching at his companion's arm while the knocker, having once fallen, was in mid air—"Do you know who hangs out *here?*"

"Is Dr. Rackstraw within?"

Dr. Rackstraw was within; and Moldwarp, cowed by such courage into doubting even his own instinct, followed the man from Nevada into the inner room. Dr. Rackstraw, who was engaged at his desk, unfolded his long legs and rose: seeing Moldwarp again, he stared.

"I've come to trouble you on a queer business, Doctor," said the man from Nevada. "But I won't apologise for bothering an Apostle—I should say a—a—you know what I mean—of civilisation till I've done. I am haunted by an elderly gentleman, who claims acquaintance with you, and insists upon it that I'm an escaped convict from one of your gaols. Will you kindly identify me? For he talks of the police, and I don't know what all: which is worrying to a quiet stranger. Do tell this elderly person that he's an ass, and get him to go."

Dr. Rackstraw spent a moment in transferring his attention to his visitors from the papers before him. "Mr. Harding—of Nevada?" said he. "An escaped convict, indeed! So this fellow has been bothering you, too, has he, as well as me? Yes: he has got a craze that the unfortunate relative of some dear friends of mine, who got himself into trouble, and whose sentence is not expired, is now in London, and at large. As if a convict who had once escaped, would be such a fool!"

"Of course he wouldn't—it would be going into the lion's den. Only I should like you to say whether there is much likeness between me and your friend's unfortunate relative—because if there is, it may be awkward you see. I knew a case where Judge Lynch hanged a man because he resembled a murderer in having a broken nose. Did you know the unfortunate relative well?" asked the man from Nevada, bringing his face into the strongest light he could find, while Moldwarp felt his faith in Instinct fading away—or rather being shattered under a crushing blow.

"A prince of the silver mines like a felon!" said Dr. Rackstraw: "Impossible—as soon would a civilised manufacturer, the heir of all the ages, resemble a savage whose custom he has not yet obtained. As soon—"

"There is *no* likeness then? None at all?"

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"No. Not a ghost. None. As a skilled physiognomist—which as a student of ethnology I am bound to be—I assert there is none. . . . . Moldwarp!" said he. "I told you this very afternoon that it is nothing to me, nothing, whether Lawrence Derwent is dead or alive. I then thought you a rascal—now I can only, in charity, suppose you to be insane. You have Lawrence Derwent on the brain. Mr. Harding agrees with me that you are insane. Mr. Harding—if this uncivilised monomaniac annoys you again, I trust you will communicate with Me."

"Then," exclaimed Silver Moldwarp, "then all I say is—Damn Instinc' for a liar and a fool!"

He was crawling out of the court with his tail between his legs, when he felt a heavy hand on his shoulder.

"I *am* Lawrence Derwent," said the man from Nevada. "The way to test if a thing is a trap is to walk in, and see—Come in here. We'll have a quiet drink, and you shall say what you please. I suppose you're some worn out tool of Rackstraw's. Never mind, old gentleman. An ill tool's best for an ill turn."

Chapter XIII.

The rarest weed that ever a wight
  In ever a hedge might look to see?
I cannot mind its name aright,
  But I think they call it Honesty.

Yet some do name it Old Man's Beard,
  And Virgin's Bower to some 'twill be:
And so by a-many names, I'm feared,
  Is called what's called—is it Honesty?

For as many as they that live by land,
  And as many as they that sail the sea,
So few be the folk that will fail to stand
  To a lie, for the sake of—Honesty.

Thus only two persons recognised Rosamond's nightmare—one by his voice, the other by his eyes.

"You wouldn't think it," began the fox to the lion, as soon as they were alone in that most complete of solitudes, a city cellar: where men hurried in and out, and used their lips and their tongues, but never their eyes or ears; "you wouldn't think it, but me and old Rackstraw was school mates together, once on a time."

"Indeed I would though," said Lawrence Derwent. "And I wouldn't send a son of mine to that school."

"And I were top-boy in grammar. But Rackstraw were bottom all round. And now, there be him, and here be I."

"Well? I follow you, so far. You called top what is called bottom in our schools. Well? I suppose it isn't for murdering

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the Queen's English you want me to pay you for putting old Rackstraw in gaol?"

"Wait a bit, Mister. I've got to tell my tale my own way: and 'tis never the short cut that brings one first home. 'Twas an old country grammar school, where the head master was eighty-three years old, and stone blind, and the second was deaf, and eighty-four. Rackstraw and me were the boys. There aren't no such schools now. So I used to spend the time practising conjuring and such like, and Rackstraw, he used to look on: and when the deaf master was keeping school, I used to study the violin."

"Well?"

"Well, Mister, when I done with education, I got into a scrape in our village, about a girl me and Rackstraw was both after: so I went into a booth that went round the fairs, and never clapped eyes on either of 'em for years. When I did, 'twas at Halehurst, where Longwood's hard by."

"We're getting nearer. Well?"

"I was pretty low down and hard up, that day. In fact, I'd been sleeping under a haystack, and was trying to fiddle up a few coppers to get a bite of food. And as I was fiddling to the stones in the street—round things, and worse for naked feet than knives—who should come by, a-horseback, but old Rackstraw: and not like a beggar neither, for he were dressed like you or me. And there was a young gentleman with him that was Lawrence Derwent by name, son and heir to Colonel Derwent of Longwood, as I came to know."

"Yes: I remember once seeing in the High Street of Halehurst the raggedest of fiddlers making his fiddle croak like a raven of ill omen, as I rode with that scoundrel to the house where my father lay dying. So it was you, who gave me that only welcome home . . . . . Well?"

"You *were* in a hurry: but old Rackstraw knew me: for he nodded, and chucked me a sovereign. I thought at first 'twas a farthing, I hadn't seen one so long. I stared: for chucking sovereigns about that was never old Rackstraw's way. Guess if Instinc' didn't lead me into the first public near. I astonished the yokels a bit, with some tricks and tunes, and got the talk on Rackstraw—"

"And I'll tell you what you ought to have heard. That my father had given me a stepmother. That Rackstraw, who had travelled with them from India, got hold of my stepmother, with his missionary jargon, and that between them they set my own father against his own son—even to getting him to make a will that left Rackstraw a small fortune, and put my young half brother Horace into the place of the heir. Is that what you heard?"

"Somewhat like: but mostly that the heir, Mr. Lawrence, was a bad lot, and was bringing the old Colonel's grey hairs with

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sorrow to the grave. Never mind, Mister. I've been a bit wild myself, before I turned archæologer. *I* don't think a bit the worse of you for that: not I."

Within the last few moments the whole manner, voice, it may almost be said the features, of Lawrence Derwent had undergone a change. Hitherto, it could only be by a marvellous effort of systematic self-control that the passionate and masterful lover of Queen Rosamond had, all in a moment, become the keen and bold fencer with Moldwarp and Rackstraw. Now, convinced that he might for once throw off his long disguise, he stretched himself out, morally speaking, with an infinite sense of relief, saddened, and for the moment softened, by the memories of what had been before he became a hunted man. He had not heard his father named since he had been convicted of robbing his father's death-bed: Moldwarp's words were beginning to fall on wandering ears. Rosamond had only flashed across evil days: with his trained faculty for shifting almost at will from mood to mood, he could lay even her aside.

"Mister," said Moldwarp, "Don't you put your face back a dozen years like that afore old Rackstraw. He'd *know* you now!"

"Go on with your story," said Lawrence, sharply. "Never mind my face. Get to the trial—when I was found guilty of—guilty, when, Rackstraw's lies and plots against me being exposed, my father sent for me, and forgave me, nay, begged *my* forgiveness, and bade me, with my own hands, and before his dying eyes, destroy the will he had been induced to make by slander and lies—"

"So that you was left heir-at-law. Now, Mr. Lawrence, what did you do next after you, by the old Colonel's orders, burnt that there will?"

"Rode into Halehurst for the doctor, as hard as I could go."

"And when you got back to Longwood—?"

"My father had died. . . . . Man, if you have nothing to say but all this thrice thrashed out stuff, why do you bring me here? Can I send Rackstraw to the treadmill for lies?"

"Well, Mister, you was a goodish time gone: for I was about the place—I'd took to run errands for old Rackstraw: and he sent for me: looking as pale and white as a ghost: and 'Moldwarp, my man,' says he, 'you're wanted to witness the Colonel's will. He's making one himself out of his own head, and I'm helping of him to write it down. And be quick, for the rattle's coming on.'"

"What—another will? When I was gone? Go on, for God's sake—"

"True enough, there sat up the Colonel in bed, with paper before him and a pen in his hand. Going, but sensible. Nobody else in the room but Rackstraw and me. He signed: and then Rackstraw put his ugly name for witness: and then I put mine. Then Rackstraw sent me off to call the wife and childer, to see

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the last gasp: but before they could get to the room, the old Colonel was gone. And it's my belief, Mister, old Rackstraw took care of that: it don't take much of a throttle to polish off a dying man: and them that's dying can tell tales, while them that's dead tell none."

"Now, by—"

"Don't get excited, Mister: leastways not here. That will said how the old 'un was re-voked: and how you was to be heir to everything, money and land: and left something to the others, and to old Rackstraw not a hang."

"And Rackstraw swore that the first will was the last made? But a murderer—why should he strain at false witness? And you—*you*, knowing this, let a murderer swear away my liberty, my more than life—mine?"

"A man must live, Mister. There had to be two witnesses—so Rackstraw chose *me*. I aren't ashamed. He knew if there's one thing I'm not capable for, it's being ungrateful—and to a old school-mate, and all. One of you had to be lugged, you see. Why shouldn't it be you? If I hadn't been second witness, 'twould have been him."

"True. Moldwarp—How is it you know the contents of that second will."

"Because I read it. Because, being light fingered by trade, I took it out of old Rackstraw's pocket, and put in another, as like outside as two peas, for him to burn."

"What!" cried Lawrence Derwent, forgetting where he was, and trembling all over. "You have that will—now?"

"Maybe no. Maybe aye. I want to do what's right: and I want to punish ingratitude. If, being a gentleman, you behave like one, the will's your own. If not being a gentleman you don't, why 'tis but Instinc' to act according. Old Rackstraw might turn grateful again if I told him what I told you."

"No, no! I am rich enough to buy back my rights twenty times. Do you suppose I came back to England for the pleasure of putting my head into a lion's den? I came back to find means of ruining those who had ruined me: and it would not have proved hard to ruin a greedy adventurer and a fool of a boy. I am rich enough to ruin fifty Horace Derwents, and a hundred Hermon Rackstraws. But now—if you have told me the one good grain of truth in a bushel of lies—When that will is in my hands, Silver Moldwarp, you shall receive—let me see: Ten thousand pounds. That's high enough, I suppose, to make sure of you?"

"Ten thousand!—Well, yes, Mr. Lawrence: I might manage to make it do—if I could make sure—"

"No Ifs, Mr. Moldwarp. And wait a bit: we must see how we stand. Suppose—suppose I produce this will, and Rackstraw and my half brother contest it as a forgery. You're clever at such things, you know. How then?"

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"Then I shall have to prove it aren't one—that's all."

"And in what position shall *you* be?"

"Me! What need I do but pocket your bit of gratitude—which is a thing I like to see? All you've got to do—seeing you've got to be so rich—is to buy a certain house that's just got into the market. I didn't like to carry a document like that about me, for fear of accidents: and owing to a misfortune, I hadn't the chance to bring it away when I had to leave. Nor for that matter was it any good to me while Rackstraw kept grateful and you was not to be found, or dead may be. I stowed it there because 'twas the last place where 'twould be looked for, the people of the house not knowing so much as how there were Derwents in the world. You buy that house: and when you've got settled, some morning you'll get a homonymous letter, telling you what corner's worth your looking to. Then you'll advertise for one Silver Moldwarp: and I shall answer it, and give all my evidence as innocent as a bird—all that's needful. Being witness of a will's no crime . . . . . and after getting the will and before me giving evidence you can hand over that ten—"

"If I get my foot on old Rackstraw, we sha'n't quarrel about terms. By God, I'd give all the silver in Nevada to be master of Longwood, and of my rights, for a day. Moldwarp, you're not a man I'd trust alone with half-a-crown. But I'm going to trust you in this: because I believe that for ten thousand pounds you'd sell your soul: and *I* run no risk, whether this is trumps or no. What's the house I'm to buy?"

"Crossmarsh. *You* know the neighbourhood, Mr. Lawrence—'tis by Lowmoor. Belonged to an old deceased customer of mine, named Fane."

"Crossmarsh—Fane! And my father's will is hidden *there?*"

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PART III.

CHAPTER I.

Only a woman's whim—only the gleam
Of that faint lightning in an August sky,
Too subtle and too swift to question whence
It comes, or whither goes, or what portends:
Only the meteor—Nature's seeming whim,
But born of Law too deep for reason's reach:
Only the outcome of an inner life,
As when we dream the breath of flowers unknown:
Only the discord but for which the flow
Of song were else too passing sweet and smooth—
These are the voices of a secret soul
Where memories, hopes, and wonders blend and pant
For freedom and for language, still in vain.
And so we say, we who behold the sign
But not the soul—only a random note,
Only a worthless, idle, woman's whim.

HER discovery, in the voice of her friend Harding of Nevada, of the being—seemingly human—who had thrown her whole life into magical confusion, filled Rosamond with a vague terror. She recalled, with a shudder, the gospel of her people, that Apahu alone was the world of men and women, and that the ocean was visible death that parted them from the infinite abode of angels, demons, and disembodied souls. She had never realised till now how penetrated she had become with the atmosphere wherein she had grown a woman and had ceased to be a child. She remembered, with a trembling of the heart, how this seeming man had been able to become visible and invisible at will: how he had been able to read her thoughts: how he transformed her from an English country girl into a Barbarian Queen, so to speak, with a wave of his hand. Could it be that every human soul has a spirit ruler over its birth, its life, and its death: that this being was hers: that her recollection of her far off girlhood was the reminiscence of a world where one lives before one is born: that her passage into Apahu, through fever and storm, was her true mortal birth: and that her return to England was in truth (as her priest had taught her) the sacrilegious intrusion by a living soul before its time into the world beyond the ocean and the grave—that her spirit Lord was there waiting to receive her and to claim his own?

And then she was so hopelessly alone. There was none whom she could take into her confidence: and her social experiences made her shrink from the talk that would follow were she to tell to strangers' ears a tale of adventure in which indeed she could not fairly expect any human being to believe. Her history had become herself, which she recoiled from the thought of laying bare. And then the more she saw of England, the more she doubted the prudence of exporting its wisdom and its virtues to a land that was already as wise as the fowls of the air and the lilies of the field.

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She herself had ceased to be a wonder of the season, having long ago fulfilled her nine days, and she shrank from calling fresh attention to herself in a new form.

If she could only meet her sister in this grim, grey, threatening spirit world—then, indeed, might she cease to be homesick for the Island of Apahu.

But of her old life, or, as it almost seemed now, of her old dream, no trace had she yet found. First of all, her letter to Sophy, addressed to Crossmarsh (for she dreaded to appear suddenly out of her grave) received no answer: and no wonder, seeing that Sophy's latest address was some *Poste Restante* abroad. Then, dreading possible death or change, she had written to the firm of solicitors who had transacted her uncle's business at the period of his comparative sanity, signing herself as Senhora Miranda, and enquiring if all was well at Crossmarsh, and, if not, what was ill. For all answer, she learned that years ago Mr. Fane, of Crossmarsh, had withdrawn his business and his papers from the firm, the name of a firm in London being given to which she was referred: that Mr. Fane and his niece were understood to be travelling on the Continent, and that Crossmarsh was standing empty. The second firm, being applied to, could only tell that they had transacted certain business for Mr. Fane, but retained none of his papers, and could tell her nothing—with such subterranean cunning had the lunatic trustee gone to work so that no one lawyer or firm of lawyers might be in a position to control his breaches of trust or to interfere with the mad investments he was making for the benefit of his country, his ward, and his craze. Oswald Hargreave, with the best legal aid, had barely been able to trace them and piece them together: no wonder that Rosamond, unaided, failed—or at any rate had failed in twice the time.

A book will some day have to be written on the craft of madmen—how it transcends that of a Moldwarp more than that of a Moldwarp transcends that of a Rackstraw, or of any other commoner, and therefore more successful, rogue. For, as a madman surpasses three sane men in strength, so he surpasses six sane men in cunning; and when—as statistics tell us is to be—the mad come to outnumber those who are otherwise, things will go hard for us who consider ourselves sane. We outwit them by numbers: they will then outwit us by numbers, strength, craft, and all. Rosamond, remembering uncle Æneas as the sanest and wisest of men, lost the thread utterly: for her own adventures did not seem so marvellous as that he and Sophy should have become wanderers over the face of the world.

At last, instead of at first (not having acquired the business sense in Apahu) she wrote to Oswald Hargrave. Her correspondence, on all sorts of uninteresting matters, was large, and Dr. Rackstraw, being with her during some part of most days, often acted as her postman—more often than not, indeed, except in the

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case of those letters which concerned her old life, and which she had invariably posted with her own hands. But there was no more reason why she should not have a letter for a Hargrave than for a Pitcairn, or a Rackstraw: he might be a missionary, or a spirit merchant, or a begging-letter writer, or a hundred other things.

But Dr. Rackstraw, assuming that a letter directed to Oswald Hargrave must needs have been written by Sophy, and not thinking it for the girl's advantage that she should be in correspondence with a bad adviser, forgot to post the letter: or rather he let it fall accidentally into the fire. And the accident gave him the keenest possible regret: because he might so easily have read it before burning. However, nobody can be always wise: even Hermon Rackstraw, being human, was bound to lapse into partial honesty now and then. Besides, he was not a poor man, like Moldwarp, who cannot afford honesty unless he happen to find it a marketable commodity.

So Rosamond had no letter even from the man who loved her when she was a child: he had gone away too.

Then, getting rid both of her philosopher and of her secretary for the occasion, she asked Mr. Pitcairn, now in charge of a London parish, to take tea, ostensibly to consult him on certain theological difficulties: in reality to pump him about Crossmarsh, without appearing to have any purpose, or letting her hand appear—as every woman, however untaught, knows how to do. It was easy enough to get him to compare his experiences of an English country rectory with those which he had brought home from the South Seas.

"If I was a young man again," said he, "I'd go out to *your* country. From what I can make out, they don't know right from wrong. Of course you'll take out a clergyman or two when you go? You might even get a bishop, if you go to the proper society and will guarantee the funds. Only mind he's one of the right sort—a tall man, with good broad shoulders, who'll stand no nonsense and no back-sliding. Get the measure and girth of your biggest priest, and don't take a bishop who isn't half a head higher and six inches larger round: let him be broad church and high church too."

"I think you would make a good bishop, Mr. Pitcairn."

"So Mrs. Pitcairn says. But *nolo episcopari:* which means 'anything for a quiet life,' in the vulgar tongue. I'm sometimes sorry I left my quiet country parish for this London of ours: I had enough missionary work while I was young, and they won't allow conversion by battery here, though it's the only way."

"Ah yes—I forgot: we were talking about your country parish—forgive me for interrupting you—and your neighbours, weren't we? The Fanes. You were just telling me about them: and I was getting interested. What sort of people were the Fanes?"

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"Ah, poor people. Old Fane—yes, I liked old Fane. He had his whims, and was a bad listener; but he was a good neighbour, and a gentleman every inch of him. He had a niece—a sad story. She drowned herself one night in a fit of brain fever. I remember it well, poor girl. Not that it wasn't for the best. She was one of those fantastical, dreamy things that are as like as not to go wrong, and are safe, any way, to lay hold of life by the wrong end."

"And the other?" asked Rosamond, hastily. "What became of her?"

"The other? Did I say there were two?"

"I thought so—"

"No doubt, I did, then. There were two. Rosamond, I think—no: it was Rosamond that was drowned. I don't know anything about the other: haven't heard of her for years. I suppose she's still abroad: married most likely. It's the saddest part of life, the way one loses sight of one's old friends. It came on me like a shock, the other day, when I heard my old country neighbour, Fane, was gone."

"Gone? What do you mean by—Gone?"

"Oh, it's only our English euphemism for Dead: and I like it best—Dead isn't a Christian word. Poor old Crossmarsh—it must be changed, without old Fane and without Me."

Had Rosamond been less thunderstruck by a piece of news which everybody hears a hundred times and a hundred times again, as if it were always told for the first time, she must have betrayed herself. As it was, she made no attempt at concealment, and would have burst into frank, open tears had not her old acquaintance shown himself so much more freezing and repellant than an utter stranger—an indifferent and forgetful friend. It was that last "Me" which chilled her outburst and froze her tears. And indeed the blank feeling that of those whom she had come from the opposite end of the earth to seek one who had gone for ever was of itself inconsistent with any sudden burst of sorrow. The ache that such blows cause is dead and dull.

"When,"—she asked harshly and icily. "And where?"

"Oh, poor old fellow—I didn't hear when. Somewhere abroad, of course. He was always abroad. By the way, I think I can recommend you a capital young clergyman to take out as your court chaplain: he's a curate of my own—not much of a scholar, but with a biceps like a cannon ball, and not a fault except that he doesn't hit it off with Mrs. Pitcairn. Shall I tell him to call?"

So, for the present, ended Rosamond's coming home. What had been the use of it all—had she, by parting from her people, rebelled against Destiny and Providence? She had come back only to find all things changed: her guardian dead, her home

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empty, her friends lost or forgetful, her sister Heaven knew where. All things were so immutable in Apahu, and had been so immutable at Crossmarsh, that the laws of nature seemed to be outraged. Her faithful secretary saw no more of her for that day: nor her philosopher for two more. And, when he was at last admitted, he found the Queen dressed in mourning, such as Englishwomen wear for their nearest kin.

This philosopher of hers had made as yet but little progress in his love-making. He could not indeed complain of any lack of friendliness on the part of the girl whom he had succeeded in withdrawing from all her other associations, but he had succeeded only too well—Sophy had become as it were merely the echo and shadow of her mistress and queen. He seldom saw her alone, and, when he did, she avoided all his attempts to turn her talk upon herself and away from her heroine, so that, growing impatient, he began to detest the very name of the Senhora Miranda. His influence over Sophy, great as it assuredly had been, and as he had felt it to be, appeared to be paling before that of the Senhora, as the glow of fire pales and dies out under the beams of the sun. However, he meant to win her, and he had plenty of time: and he was a man who really understood the use of time—not merely as something to be spent, but to be economised, and invested, without any hurry to realise.

He, like the rest of her diminishing acquaintance, had long set down the Queen as a very woman in the matter of caprice, and her sudden appearance in the deepest of black was only one evidence more of a quality that he hoped in time to turn to good account in his designs upon the heart of Sophy. But, capricious and whimsical as he thought her, he was not prepared for the intention with which she one morning favoured him.

"I am tired of London," said she, as she played with an open newspaper. "I think I have learned all here that will be of any good to my people—there was really very little to learn. But I don't want to go back just yet . . . . . and I want to be by myself for a little while, in the country, and by the sea. Here is an advertisement in the newspaper, which suits me exactly: just as if it were printed for my eyes to see."

"Oh, those advertisements," said Dr. Rackstraw. "Yes: *they* are always just what everybody wants—what have you found?"

"A house, with lands, and grounds, and everything *I* want, to be sold."

"Your Majesty thinks of buying an estate in England!" exclaimed Dr. Rackstraw, immediately casting about in his mind for the chance of turning this new caprice to the account of business: for, though his irons were mostly abroad, he had a few at home. "You think of settling among us for good and all?"

"I don't know what I think—I am just wearied out with think-

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ing," said she, "and I want to go to sleep somewhere, where I haven't got to choose between opening the windows for fear of stifling and shutting them for fear of noise. But I don't understand business. Go to these lawyers, or men of business, or whatever they are, and buy this place for me, and then come back again as soon as it is done."

"Oh!" sighed Sophy, "then you are going—you are not 'going home,' after all?"

"Yes—no. Would you mind leaving me for five minutes, while I talk business with Dr. Rackstraw? . . . . . Doctor, before I talk about this house, I'm glad you came: I want to thank you for bringing me that child. She is made of starlight—or as you would say, of gold."

"Yes, indeed. You cannot think better of her than I."

"She is good, like *my* people. How is it that being good means being unhappy?"

"Unhappy! Do you mean that Sophy is unhappy, and with you?"

"She has become like a daughter to me. But in my country daughters tell their mothers all their sorrows: and I know no more of her than just her name, and that you are her friend. She reminds me of a girl in my country who listened to words that ought not to be spoken—about killing a holy bird. She was unholy till the second new moon. Has Miss Gray ever done anything wrong, that she effaces herself so? You may tell me—I am her mother and her Queen, not her judge: and it will make no difference to me. She has been my daughter till past the second new moon, by a long time."

Dr. Rackstraw pondered and frowned. It was of the utmost importance that Sophy, under the wing of the Queen, that is to say under his own watchful control, should be kept apart from her true lover and from the renewal of the influence of her old friend. If Senhora Miranda became acquainted with the real story of her maid of honour, her royal generosity would certainly not rest until the mists of his own devising were cleared away. So he looked at the ceiling, stroked his chin, and said,

"Wrong, your majesty, is a word that may mean almost anything—it often means right, just as right often means wrong. Of course there are reasons why Miss Gray should wish to forget the past, and to begin life all over again. Of course there was no reason why she should not enter into your service. I brought her to you, chiefly because I knew she would serve you well—but also because I knew that in your service she would be safe from that most cruel of all cruel things: idle curiosity. I felt secure that not a word would be said by you or yours to make her conscious of her past, or to make her dread her future . . . . . I am glad for her sake that you think of a retirement into the country—"

If right and wrong have many meanings, Love has surely more.

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Love had inspired Dr. Rackstraw to keep this girl to himself by hinting away her good name albeit—a stroke of business that would have occurred to perhaps no other man in the world. But then he, ignoble himself, had brains enough to have discovered the lioness in the Queen of Apahu: and so,

"I thank you with all my heart," said she. "She is more than ever my daughter now: and not one word will I speak that may hinder her forgetting. . . . . Yes: I know this world beyond the sea well enough now: I have read, and heard, and seen, how Christians, who call my people blind, savage heathens, deal with one another just when love and pardon are all in all. She shall go back with me. Ah—*I* know what it means to be alone—all alone. So thank you, for understanding me: you are worthy to be a savage and a heathen. . . . . Yes: London worse than wearies me. About this purchase. I am getting impatient to go."

"I'm afraid an estate can't, in this benighted, old-fashioned England of ours, be bought in a day. It isn't like the system I've introduced into the Goblins, where ten thousand acres can be transferred, and the purchase money paid what's equivalent to down, by two strokes of the pen."

"At any rate as soon as you can. I don't understand business, or I wouldn't trouble you. Here is the advertisement. It will tell you the name of the estate, and where to go."

"*By order of the Court of Chancery*," he began to read. "Crossmarsh? . . . . . Your majesty thinks of buying *Crossmarsh?*—"

"Why not? Do you know the place? Why should I not buy Crossmarsh if I please?"

If Dr. Rackstraw were sitting in the Palace of Truth, he would have found it easy enough to answer. He would have said, "Because she whom I choose to call Miss Gray will be the seller: because you and she cannot be kept in ignorance of it: because Crossmarsh is the very last place on earth where I would have her go: because Oswald Hargrave will be her neighbour: because, whatever happens, she will have escaped back to the very citadel of old associations out of my hands, before their grasp has become secure." He was so taken aback by the extraordinary accident of this capricious princess having taken a fancy to Crossmarsh that the fates seemed to have joined in league against his passion, and, for once, he scarcely knew what to say.

"Crossmarsh—let me see: oh, the very worst part of the coast of all England for scenery: not a civilised town within miles: not even a railway: all swamps and malaria: and—ah—I remember: next door to a convict prison. Dear madam, you would die of typhoid fever in a month, if you weren't murdered before—"

"You seem prejudiced against the neighbourhood?" asked Rosamond, a little surprised. "Have you ever been there? Never mind. I have set my mind on this particular estate: and, if I

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don't like it, I can sell it again, and come away. Please go and buy it—"

"It is my duty to protest, Madam!" exclaimed Dr. Rackstraw. "There are dozens of lovely places in England—hundreds: scores. What on earth has made you fix on such an abominable hole, where prisoners are sent to rot and die? *I* will find you a place in the country fit for a Queen."

"Oh, I don't want a place fit for a Queen. I want a place where nobody else will come, fit for a girl who wants to forget, and a woman who is tired, and wants to go to sleep and dream—"

"To commit suicide, you mean!"

"Dr. Rackstraw, I am a Queen, and not used to be disobeyed. If Crossmarsh is so bad as you say, all the more reason why I should buy it, to keep other people from dying of fever or murder. I must see such a place, just for the sake of knowing the exact opposite of Apahu. What is the use of having crossed the ocean of death unless one gets a glimpse of Hell? I thought I had seen it, here in London: but—go and buy Crossmarsh: it is my will."

"Yes," muttered Dr. Rackstraw, "a woman always calls her whim her will. But I say won't: and where there's a won't there's a way. . . . . Well," said he, sullenly for him, "I will see about it. Seeing about it will do no harm."

"Give any price they want," said Rosamond, "I don't want bargaining—and I want to go to-morrow, if I can."

Eagerness was imprudent: but then nobody thinks of analysing the whims and caprices of a Queen.

Only that morning, and by the merest chance, for she was no newspaper reader, Rosamond had learned that her old home was for sale. That, at least remained, whoever the owner who wished to sell it might be. That she would soon learn: though that Sophy would part with Crossmarsh while one brick remained upon another and while one wave struck against its cliffs was among the things too impossible to suggest themselves. Crossmarsh might in some way act as a link to bring her to Sophy—if not, Rosamond would have conscious and tangible possession of all that was left to her of her childhood—of that home-life that had been hers before she became an exile and a Queen. She could have almost struck Rackstraw for his abuse of a place, that obviously he had never seen, for its actual merits and for its imaginary vices. Whether she would actually visit that old home she had become doubtful. That moment was over when the name of Crossmarsh, standing out from a lawyer's or estate agent's phrases, made her quiver with the wash of waves, more musical than all the rest of ocean, and with the scent of flowers more fragrant to the heart than all the southern profusion of Apahu. Perhaps she would let it all remain a memory and a dream—all the rest of her home-coming was a failure: why should this also be spoiled?

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THE TOWER OF LONDON.

I.

EXTENSIVE alterations and demolitions are at present in progress within the precincts of her Majesty's Tower; and the opportunity, consequently, is a favourable one for reviewing the history of a building the most perfect in the country as regards the preservation of its ancient architecture, as well as the most interesting and tragic in its manifold incidents and associations. We may say at the outset, however, that the spirit of Vandalism is in no sense at work in the Tower, as it is in so many other portions of the city, where numbers of our finest churches are being either "restored" or "improved" off the face of the earth. All that is now being done in connection with the great stronghold built by William the Conqueror does not affect those parts of the structure which are its chief glory, and which have certainly received loving care for several centuries past; the alterations concern only additional buildings used for storage and the like, and round which no historical memories cling. Their removal will leave the Tower itself more imposing than ever, and the noble White Tower will once more have that uninterrupted frontage to the river which its architect contemplated in the outset.

Recent excavations have brought to light a portion of the old Roman wall which formed the limits of the city. This wall runs close by the eastern side of the White Tower, and its discovery has naturally excited great interest. It is easy to see how, at the Conquest, William I. built the Tower just within the city, for it is, as it were, but a hop, step and jump from the Tower to the city wall. The Conqueror had an eye to complete protection from assaults on London from the eastern land side. It will be best here briefly to detail the nature of the operations which have recently been in progress, and are not yet completed. The old armour and other articles of curiosity, which formerly found a place in the Horse Armoury, have been removed to the upper floor of the White Tower. The Horse Armoury building is merely a modern annexe on the south side of the White Tower, and will soon be in course of demolition. In the meantime, it remains as the temporary Ordnance Office. The great store-house on the south side of the White Tower has already been removed; this

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was the chief obstacle to a fine view of the Tower from the river, and now it is entirely open on that side to the Thames. It is intended to restore the curtain wall between the Wakefield Tower and the Salt Tower; also to restore the Lanthorn Tower, which will then stand about midway between the Wakefield and Salt Towers. A short time ago the Well Tower and the Cradle Tower were restored, and these are now inhabited by warders. Near here, also, there has been, until recently, a large building, used as a store-house for muskets by the Ordnance Department, but this has been completely removed. The Government sold the materials of this annexe for a considerable sum. It lay to the east side of the White Tower, and it was during its demolition that the old city wall was revealed, greatly to the surprise of the workmen and the officials. The wall ran down from Postern Row to the river side. Within the White Tower three fireplaces have lately been uncovered; and the well, used for drinking and culinary purposes by the prisoners and their attendants, has been re-discovered, and overhauled to the depth of about forty feet.

The Byward Tower, another very historic part of the building, is further to be restored; that is, it is in contemplation to take down the upper part and rebuild it exactly as it stood in ancient times. The Broad Arrow Tower, in the east inner wall, is also undergoing complete restoration, having been in the hands of the restorers for the past twelve months. St. Peter's Chapel—where lie the remains of so many illustrious dead—was, a few years ago, entirely re-seated. The old gallery has been taken away, and the burial place, a great vault under the communion table in the chancel, has been restored. By command of the Queen the remains found here were carefully examined, and it was established beyond a doubt that the dust of many distinguished English men and women reposes in this spot. When all the work at the Tower is thoroughly completed, the approaches to the building will be in a more satisfactory condition than they have been for a great many years, and a visit to this famous building will be considerably simplified.

It is surely impossible for any one—any Englishman, at least—to stand within the limits of the Tower without feeling the historic spirit strongly stirred within him. There passes before his mind's eye a long procession of kings and queens, of warriors, of statesmen, of learned and saintly men who have had much to do with the making of the English people. From William the Conqueror to Victoria is a long and momentous range, and yet, as one thinks of those who have lived, suffered, and bled in the Tower, the olden times seem almost blended with the present, and with little effort of the imagination we can realise the characters and appearance of our ancestors. The knightly Raleigh, the beautiful Anne Boleyn, the diabolical Gloucester, the temporising Cranmer, the hapless Lady Jane Grey—these and a hundred

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others appear before us in the habit in which they lived, as we gaze upon this mighty memorial of the past.

To go back to the foundation of the Tower of London as a mere stronghold or fortress is impossible. Its origin is lost in the mazes of antiquity, but there seems little doubt, from a reference in the Saxon Chronicle and other evidence, that it was used as a Saxon fortress long before the Conquest. Some writers affirm that it extends back to the days of Cæsar, but there is a great lack of authoritative information upon Julius's movements, and, with regard to the Tower, it may or not have been that the Romans found its site well adapted for a fortification. Those who assert the affirmative may of course adhere to their opinion with as much tenacity as those who persistently deny it. We must be content to leave it—if not a "burning," certainly an open question.

But we are, at least, in no doubt as to the origin of the present structure. Its chief tower was raised in 1079-80 by William the Conqueror, the architect being Gundulph, Bishop of Rochester, who, whatever he might have been as an ecclesiastic, certainly understood the art of masonry. Not many people have such an enduring monument to their skill. He also built Rochester Castle, and the similarity of the architecture of the two buildings will strike any spectator. Compared with the Tower of London, most celebrated places in Europe are but mushroom growths. It has been pointed out that the oldest remnant of a palace in Europe is that of the west front of the Burg in Vienna, which dates back from the time of Henry III. The Kremlin in Moscow and the Doge's Palace in Vienna are of the fourteenth century. Other famous buildings are still later, so that the Tower of London occupies the most conspicuous and venerable place in the annals of European architecture.

The fortress is divided into two parts, the Inner and the Outer Wards. The latter ward consists of a chain of small towers or fortifications on that side nearest the Thames, all of which were erected by Henry III. towards the close of his long reign. Outworks which were formerly used to defend the tower have been removed, and the visitor now enters at once by the Middle Tower, a strong portal flanked with bastions, and defended by gates and a portcullis. This fortification has undergone changes since Henry's time, for the upper part is of comparatively modern date. Next comes a similar fortress, the Byward Tower, and then we arrive at the Traitors' Gate, or St. Thomas's Tower. This is a large square building, built over the moat, the outer line of which is protected by two circular towers. Inside the towers are some interesting specimens of the Early Pointed architecture of the time of Henry III. State prisoners were conveyed into the Tower by the passage underneath; and up the steps into the courtyard many a celebrated victim of royal

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jealousy has ascended to his or her doom. When a prisoner was conveyed from Westminster by boat to the Traitors' Gate, he knew what fate was in store for him. Of the Cradle Tower and the Well Tower only fragments exist of the original, while the Devlin or Iron Gate Tower has been replaced by a strong building of modern date. The ancient structure was described in 1641 as a very ruinous place. These were the towers which, with the lofty ramparts of the outer ballium wall, and the surrounding moat, completed the fortifications of the outer ward.

Before dealing with the Inner Ward, which of course is the heart of the whole thing, we will consider the White Tower. This fortress, as we have seen, was built by Gundulph. It is truly an imposing building, quadrangular in character, and measuring 116 feet from north to south and 96 feet from east to west. It is 92 feet high, is embattled, and has watch towers, or turrets, at each angle. The building contains three lofty stories, and its external walls, 15 feet in thickness, convey a strong reproach upon our modern London jerry builders. Each story of the Tower contains one large apartment and two smaller ones. On the first floor the smallest division is called Queen Elizabeth's armoury. At the north side of this apartment is a doorway communicating with a cell ten feet long and eight wide, which has no light save that which comes from the entrance. This is said to have been the prison of Sir Walter Raleigh, and his *History of the World* is believed to have been written in the armoury. On the wall near the entrance of the cell are cut the names of Fane, Rudston, and Culpepper, who were implicated in Sir Thomas Wyat's rebellion in 1553. That rebellion proved fatal not only to Lady Jane Grey, on whose behalf it was undertaken, but also to Wyat himself, who was beheaded on Tower Hill in 1553. In the upper story, and over these apartments, is St. John's Chapel, and that is no empty boast which describes it as one of the finest and most perfect specimens of Norman architecture to be found in this country. Its massive pillars, both from their appearance and completeness, might have been reared yesterday. Henry III. had three windows of stained glass placed in this chapel. Provision for regular service here was formerly made, but now it is only occasionally used for worship, as in the event of St. Peter's Church not being available, etc. One historical incident in connection with the largest room in this upper floor, formerly used as a council chamber, must not be omitted. It was here that Richard, Duke of Gloucester, ordered Lord Hastings to instant execution, the place of execution being the space in front of St. Peter's Chapel. The scene is thus briefly described by the historian:—"Men who could not see with Gloucester's eyes, soon found that the Duke had a swift and ugly way of freeing himself from luke-warm friends. Lord Hastings felt it first. Pushing forward the young king's coronation, Richard called a

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council, in which some of the men who knew his soul had seats. They met in the Council Chamber, where Lord Hastings, instead of playing into the Duke's hands, spoke up stoutly for the king; on which Gloucester, who had been listening in a passage, rushed into the council room, tore up his sleeve, showed a withered arm, which he accused Hastings of having caused by impious arts, and asked his councillors what should be done. Words were useless. At a sign from Gloucester bands of soldiers rushed from the corridors, tore Hastings from the table, dragged him down-stairs, and, finding the block on the green out of order, threw him across a beam of wood and hacked off his head." It was short shrift amongst these gentlemen, when the more fortunate plotter got the less fortunate into his power.

The Inner ward has twelve small fortifications, the first of which is ominously called the Bloody Tower. The noble gateway under it is believed to have been erected by Edward III. in 1327. It was in this tower that the murder of the Princes, the two sons of Edward IV., is said to have been perpetrated in 1483. Upon the authority of Lord Bacon and Sir Thomas More, the crime was certainly committed in the Tower, and researches, as well as a most curious incident, have helped to strengthen, if not to confirm beyond doubt, the belief that the murder took place in the Bloody or Garden Tower, as it was also called. The deed was another for which the infamous Gloucester was responsible. He had left for the North while the crime was being done, but "his instruments had been chosen and his orders given. Yet the course of murder never quite runs smooth. Brackenbury was at his prayers when the King's meaning was made known to him in a few sharp words. Finding him on his knees, the royal message was not likely to find him in the mood. He refused his task. The King had ridden so far as Warwick Castle when he heard that Sir John declined his office, and though it was midnight when the rider came in, he slipped from his couch, passed into the guard-room, where Sir James Tyrrell, his master of the horse, lay sleeping on a pallet-bed, and gave a few sure words of instruction to that trusty knight. Tyrrell rode back to London, bearing a royal order that Brackenbury should, for one night only, give up his command, with the keys and passwords. The month was August; the days were hot, and Tyrrell was much oppressed in soul; for murder is not an easy thing at best, and the errand on which he was riding to the Tower was one of the foulest ever known. But he feared the new King even more than he feared the devil and all his fires. Two trusty knaves were at his side—John Dighton and Miles Forrest, fellows on whose strong arms and callous hearts he could count for any deed which the King might bid them do. These men he took down to the Gate house, where the princes lay; and after getting the keys and passes from Brackenbury, he closed the Tower gates, and sent the two ruffians up into the princes' room. In a few

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seconds the deed was done. Stealing downstairs, the murderers called their master, who stood watching near the gate, to come up and see that the boys were dead. Tyrrell crept up by the private door, and after giving a few orders to his agents, and calling the Tower priest to their help, he rode away from the scene and from London, bearing the dread news to his master, who was still going north towards York." The murderers dug a hole near the gateway, threw in the bodies, and covered them up with earth and stones. But the arch-murderer Richard commanded the bodies to be taken up and interred elsewhere. The second place of sepulchre was known to no one. Some years afterwards Tyrrell and Dighton were anxious to confess their crime to Richard's successor Henry, but the most satisfactory piece of evidence which could be tendered—the knowledge of the grave of the young princes—was not forthcoming. This was not brought to light until two hundred years afterwards. "In the reign of Charles II. when the keep (no longer used as a royal palace) was being filled with state papers, some workmen, in making a new staircase into the royal chapel, found, under the old stone steps, hidden close away and covered with earth, the bones of two boys, which answered in every way to those which had been sought so long. Deep public wonder was excited; full enquiry into all the facts was made; and a report being sent to Charles that these bones were those of the murdered princes, the King gave orders for their removal to a royal sepulchre in Westminster Abbey. The bones thus found now lie in the Great Chapel built by Henry VII., side by side with some of the most eminent of English Kings." Such is an outline of the facts connected with one of the most pathetic incidents in English history.

After the Bloody Tower comes the Bell Tower, so named from its having been surmounted by the alarm-bell of the garrison. Used formerly as a prison, Queen Elizabeth and Fisher, the well-known Bishop of Rochester, are said, amongst others, to have suffered imprisonment here. Of the Beauchamp Tower, which is next in order, we shall have more to say shortly, and pass on at present to the Devereux Tower. Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, the brilliant favourite of Queen Elizabeth, gave his name to this tower. The fortunes and misfortunes of Essex are well known to every student of our history. One of the most accomplished men of his time, he was cut off by treachery at the early age of thirty-four; and the remembrance of his untoward fate embittered the remaining years of the Queen's life.

The next tower is the Flint Tower, or "Little Hell," significantly named thus from the narrowness of its dungeons. Then there is the Bowyer Tower, once the residence of the King's chief archer, and in one of whose rooms the Duke of Clarence is said to have been drowned in a butt of Malmsey in 1474. Next is the Brick Tower, assigned in tradition as the prison of Lady Jane Grey;

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then comes the Jewel or Martin Tower, upon whose walls is carved the name of Anne Boleyn, supposed to have been cut by one of her unfortunate supporters. The Constable Tower and the Broad Arrow Tower were used as prison lodgings. The Salt Tower, also used as a prison tower, is amongst the oldest portions of the fortress. A noted astrologer was imprisoned here in Elizabeth's reign. Between the Salt and the Record Towers is the site of the Lanthorn Tower, which was removed to make way for the Ordnance Office.

The Record Tower is believed to have been built by William Rufus in 1087. It is also called the Wakefield Tower, from the fact that the Yorkists were imprisoned there after the disastrous battle of Wakefield in 1460. With the exception of the White Tower it is the largest of the structures. Its walls are very massive. Here the records of the nation were once kept, including grants from Edward the Confessor, and upwards of two thousand Rolls of Chancery, beginning in the first year of King John, and continuing to the last of Edward IV. They contain negotiations and alliances with foreign powers; grants of liberties and privileges to corporations and private individuals; statements relative to the Royal prerogative, revenue, and courts of judicature; mandates touching the coin; salaries of the Royal household; accounts of proceedings at coronations; letters to the Pope and Cardinals, relative to the ecclesiastical affairs of the kingdom; records of the Court of Admiralty; and a large number of other important documents." These precious records have been removed from the Tower and placed under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Rolls.

Amongst other places worthy of note are the Lieutenant's lodgings, in one room of which, on the second floor, the Gunpowder Plot conspirators were examined in 1605. There is also the new Jewel House, where the Crown Jewels are to be seen. Not the least interesting building in the courtyard is St. Peter's Chapel, which was erected in the reign of Edward I., 1272, upon the site of a still finer church, built by Henry I. nearly two centuries before. Architecturally the present building is in nowise notable, but it enshrines the remains of Lady Jane Grey, Thomas Cromwell, the Earl of Surrey, the Earl of Essex, Sir Thomas More, and other illustrious persons.

But of all the Tower buildings none possesses so many attractions to the antiquarian and the lover of history as the Beauchamp Tower. The architecture belongs to the period of King John, but the name is said to have sprung from Thomas de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who was imprisoned here in the reign of Richard II. It has also been called the Cobham Tower, from the fact that some members of that family were incarcerated within its walls in Mary's reign. Whether it was on the ground of its greater general security, or because of the strength of its prison apartments, does not appear, but it certainly seems to have been more frequently used as a State prison than the other towers.

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The rooms bear many inscriptions, carved upon their walls by men who suffered the fate of death on the green beneath. One of the famous Neviles has left his record here, and there is also an elaborate piece of work, representing three wheat-sheaves—the arms of the Peverels—together with a crucifix, a bleeding heart, a skeleton, and the word "Peverel." In the southern recess of the large apartment on the first floor is an inscription in old Italian, signed "Wilim: Tyrrel, 1541," and which, read in English, is as follows, "Since fortune hath chosen that my hope should go to the wind to complain, I wish the time were destroyed; my planet being ever sad and unpropitious." This Tyrrel is thought to have been one of the Knights of Malta. Not to be passed over is the inscription over the fireplace by Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, eldest son of the Duke of Norfolk, who was executed in 1572, for aspiring to the hand of Mary, Queen of Scots. A strong Romanist, he had naturally few friends at the Court of Elizabeth. The fates were against him, for just as he was leaving England to take up his residence abroad, he was arrested on the Sussex coast, and conveyed to the Tower. He has left an inscription in Latin, signed, "Arundel, June 22, 1587"—which being rendered into English, runs: "The more suffering with Christ in this world, the more glory with Christ in the next." He built many hopes upon the Spanish Armada, but these must have been ruthlessly dashed to the ground when the news reached him of the greatest naval *fiasco* the world has ever witnessed. Arundel died in the Tower, from grief and the results of asceticism combined, in the year 1595, when he was but thirty-nine years of age. To the right of this fireplace is a large piece of carving by John Dudley, Earl of Warwick, brother-in-law of Lady Jane Grey, by her marriage with Lord Guildford Dudley. There is the family badge of the Dudleys, with the lion and the bear grasping the ragged staff. They are worked upon a shield, surrounded by a border of oak leaves, acorns, and roses. This inscription is also graven:

"Yow that these beasts do wel behold and se
May deme with ease wherfore made here they be,
With borders eke wherin
4 brothers' names who list to serche the ground."

The explanation is, that Ambrose, Robert, Guildford, and Henry Dudley, with their father and elder brother, were imprisoned in the Tower in July 1553, in consequence of their attempt to create Lady Jane queen.

A great number of names are to be found carved in the western recess, amongst them those of Arthur and Edmund Poole, the great grandsons of the murdered Duke of Clarence, who were imprisoned in the Tower (in which they died) for conspiring to place Mary Queen of Scots upon the throne, and on other counts. No inscription by Lady Jane Grey has been found, but the word

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"IANE" cut in stone in this Tower, is believed to be the work of her loving husband. Fox, the martyrologist, affirms that Lady Jane traced these words, with a pin, upon the wall of the prison in which she was confined—

"To mortals' common fate thy mind resign
My lot to-day, to-morrow may be thine."

But nothing of the kind has been discovered in any part of the Tower. A romantic interest attaches to the man whose autograph —"Egremond Radclyffe, 1576. Pour Parvenir,"—is to be found on the eastern side of this room, in the Beauchamp Tower. Radclyffe, who was the only son of the Earl of Sussex, and a bigoted Papist to boot, was concerned in the rebellion against Elizabeth, in the north of England, in 1576. After wandering about Europe for some years, he returned to England on his own account, and was sent to the Tower. Being subsequently banished from the country, he entered the service of Don John of Austria, but, suspected of being an English spy, sent out to assassinate Don John, the Emperor of Austria ordered him to be executed before Namur.

For a long time Anne Boleyn was believed to have been imprisoned in this Tower, but her last abode was the Royal palace, as shown by a letter addressed to Secretary Cromwell by Sir William Kingston, the then Governor of the Tower.

We have before us a curious little volume upon the Tower of London and its treasures, published in 1754. At that time one portion of the Tower was devoted to a show of lions and other wild beasts. The visitor found a look round the Tower a much more expensive affair one hundred-and-thirty years ago than it is now. There was a charge of sixpence to see the lions, threepence for the foot armoury, twopence for the train of artillery, threepence for the horse armoury, twopence for the Spanish armoury, and one shilling and sixpence to view the Regalia. The masses of the people were thus practically debarred from viewing this ancient historic building. But the person who did go, and paid his money, generally came away disgusted, for he was hurried from place to place at a rate which completely prevented him from appreciating or understanding what he saw. A very different state of things exists now, under the *régime* of the courteous chief-warder, Mr. Thomas Bunyan, and his staff of assistants.

In former times, and not very long ago either, great ceremony was used at the opening and shutting of the principal gate of the Tower, night and morning. A little before six in the morning in summer, and as soon as well light in the winter, the yeoman porter went to the Governor's house for the keys, from whence he proceeded to the innermost gate, attended by a sergeant and six men from the main guard. This gate being opened to let them pass, was again shut, while the yeoman porter and the guard proceeded to open the three outermost gates, at each of which the guards rested

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their firelocks, as also did the spur guard, while the keys passed and repassed. Upon the yeoman porter's return to the innermost gate, he called to the warders in waiting to take in King George's keys, upon which the gate was opened, and the keys were lodged in the Warders' Hall till the time of locking, which was usually about ten or eleven at night, with the same formality as when opened. After they were shut, the yeoman and guard proceeded to the main guard, who were all under arms with the officers upon duty at their head, and the usual challenge from the main guard to the yeoman porter was,

"Who comes there?"

His answer was brief, "The Keys."

The challenger said, "Pass Keys," upon which the officer ordered the guard to rest their firelocks. The yeoman porter then said,

"God save King George!"

"Amen!" was loudly answered by all the guard. From the main guard, the yeoman porter with his guard proceeded to the Governor's, where the keys were left, after which no person could go out or come in upon any pretence whatsoever till the next morning, without the watchword for the night, which was kept so secret that none but the proper officers, and the sergeant upon guard, were able to obtain any knowledge of it. A similar custom was observed in every fortified place throughout the Sovereign's dominions. When the watchword was given by any stranger to the sentinel at the outer gate, the latter communicated it to his sergeant, who passed it to the next on duty, and so on, until it came to the Governor, or commanding officer, by whom the keys were delivered to the yeoman porter, who—attended as before, the main guard being put under arms—brought them to the outer gate, where the stranger was admitted, and conducted to the commandant. Having made known his business, he was reconducted to the outer gate, dismissed, the gate shut, and the keys re-delivered with all the formality as at first.

This ceremony, it is needless to say, is very much simplified now.

There was a splendid show of lions and other wild beasts and birds, to be seen in the Tower at the time the little work we have already referred to was issued. A noted lioness, Jenny, who had given birth to numerous progeny, was at that time forty years old. She was the oldest specimen of the kind that had ever lived in the Tower, though beasts had been kept there for upwards of five hundred years. There were also two Egyptian and two Turkish apes, of whom naïve stories are told. For example, "The male Egyptian having one day broken his chain, in the twinkling of an eye he mounted to the top of one of the offices, and there set his keepers at defiance. When they prepared to set ladders to attack him by storm, he played the tiles about their heads with such dexterity, strength, and nimbleness, that he fairly beat them

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off: when they attempted to surprise him by stratagem, he was no less vigilant than before he had been active, and discovered as much sagacity in defeating their plots as he had courage in opposing their attacks. Finding him to be neither overcome by force nor stratagem, they had recourse to milder methods, and thought to entice him down by feasting his companions openly in his sight; but that, too, failed of success. He seemed to divert himself much by the chattering he made, in baffling all the arts they could devise to catch him; at length, after untiling almost all the place, and laughing as long as he thought proper at those who thought themselves wiser than himself, he came very orderly down, and retired to his own apartment." Tigers and leopards were also kept at the Tower, and there was a golden eagle, which had been an inhabitant of the place for ninety years. With reference to the great age which eagles sometimes attain, it may be mentioned that the Benedictine monks of the abbey of St. Bertin, at St. Omer, had an eagle which they claimed to be upwards of three hundred years old. Of one of the lions in the Tower it was reported that a spaniel having been thrown into his den, instead of hurting it, he cherished it and contracted such a fondness for it, that he would never suffer it to be taken out again; but fed it at his table until it died, which was not for several years.

There is, as every one knows, a fine collection of armour at the Tower; and a capital story is told at the expense of a warder whose duty it was to exhibit it in the time of George II. He always directed special attention to a particular breast-plate, which had had the lower edge of the left side carried away by a slant shot of a cannon ball; and he stated that the skin of the man's body that wore it, and part of his bowels, were carried away at the same time. Notwithstanding this, being put under the care of a skilful surgeon, the man recovered and lived for ten years afterwards. This story the old warder told in season and out of season, and when the Prince of Wales came to visit the Tower, he repeated it with much impressiveness to his Royal Highness, when they came to this particular breastplate. The Prince, who was fond of his joke, listened with apparent pleasure, and when the warder had done, his countenance beamed with seeming satisfaction and approval.

"And what, friend," exclaimed the Prince, "is there so extraordinary in all this? I remember, myself, to have read in a book of a soldier who had his head cleft in two so dexterously by his enemy, that one half of it fell on one shoulder and the other half on the opposite shoulder; and yet, on his comrades clapping the two sides nicely together again, and binding them close with his handkerchief, the man did well, drank his pot of ale at night, and scarcely recollected that he had ever been hurt!"

This story, so seasonably applied, put all the company who

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attended his Royal Highness into a horse laugh. The laugh dashed the old warder and completely killed his marvellous recital, for he never had the courage to trot his own story out again.

In the early part of last century breast-plates were not thought necessary at first, till the want of them was severely felt at the Battle of Dettingen, when the Black Musketeers of the enemy being covered with their cuirasses—the same piece of armour with the addition of a back piece—pierced the very lines of the English army, and rode up undaunted to the muzzles of our guns, till being flanked by our foot, and ill-supported by their own troops, they were compelled to retire, though with an inconsiderable loss, considering their desperate attempt. This plainly discovered the great use of breast-plates, and orders were sent to England for the immediate embarkation of all that were in the Tower fit for service. At an earlier date also there had been the same omission, till the Duke of Marlborough, being convinced of the disadvantage his horse fought under, against an enemy entrenched, as it were, in iron, sent Lord Cardigan over, who went himself to the Tower, and chose out as many breast and back-plates as he could find fit for his purpose. But the Duke would not suffer the back-plates to be worn, being, as he said a useless incumbrance, for he was sure his men would never show their backs to the enemy.

Amongst the armour at the Tower is that of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, which is the heaviest suit in the place. Brandon was an accomplished rider at the tournaments, and achieved some remarkable feats. The armour of Lord Courcy is also interesting, this Courcy being, according to report, the Grand Champion of Ireland, in which capacity, at a trial of strength, he wrenched the sword from the champion of France. For this valiant action he and all his successors had the honour conferred upon them of wearing their hats in the King's presence. This privilege still belongs to Lord Kingsale, as the representative of the ancient and noble family of Courcy. It is further recorded of the valiant Courcy that when a conspiracy was formed against him in Ireland, by his own servants, at the instigation of Hugh de Lucy, who was jealous of his power, although he was betrayed at his devotions, he laid thirteen of the conspirators dead at his feet, before he was overpowered. History does not say whether Courcy fought in armour, while his assailants were unprotected, but if this were the case, and the armour were such as is exhibited at the Tower, there is no room for surprise that he should have been able to kill thirteen of his enemies. So with those who wore the armour on horseback; they were completely protected at every point, and a few such horse-soldiers might commit deadly havoc with a whole regiment of comparatively unprotected footmen.

There is no story connected with the Tower more interesting in

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some respects than that of Colonel Blood's attempt to carry off the Crown Jewels in the reign of Charles II. The projector of this daring deed was an Irish gentleman by birth, who had led a wild and an extraordinary life. He had fought under Charles I., Cromwell, and Charles II., so that he was at least a very accommodating warrior—a kind of military Vicar of Bray. Being disappointed with the way in which "the Merry Monarch" had treated him after following Charles's fortunes through evil and through good report, and obtaining no redress when that king had been restored to his rights, Blood conceived a very formidable scheme. He had before been engaged in several desperate but unsuccessful plots, such as the surprising of Dublin Castle, the seizure of the person of the Duke of Ormonde, etc., and he now decided upon a grand *coup*, which should recompense him for everything. This was no other than a plot to seize the Crown, globe, sceptre, and dove, and to carry them all off together. To accomplish this he assumed the garb of a doctor of divinity, with a little band, a long false beard, a cap with ears, and all those other formalities of garb belonging to that degree except the gown. For this he substituted a cloak, the better to carry out his design. Under this disguise he made it his business to become acquainted with the Keeper of the Regalia, an old man, whom he treated and caressed in a kind and obliging manner, but not in such a way as to excite suspicion. The result was that a close friendship was soon established between them, and the old man having a son and Blood pretending to have a daughter, they mutually agreed to match them together. But as the son was at sea there was no necessity for the daughter personally to be brought forward.

On the night before the deed was to be done, Blood told the old gentleman that he had some friends at his house who wanted to see the Regalia, but that they were to go out of town tolerably early in the morning; and, therefore, hoped he would gratify them with the sight, although they might come a little before the usual hour. Blood had three accomplices in his enterprise, named Desborough, Kelsey, and Perrot. Two of them came with the pretended doctor in the morning, while the third held their horses in waiting for them at the outer gate of the Tower, all ready saddled. The conspirators had no other apparatus but a wallet and a wooden mallet, which there was no great difficulty in concealing. On their arrival the Keeper of the Jewels received them with much civility, and soon admitted them into his office, but as it was customary for the keeper, when he exhibited the Regalia, to lock himself up in a kind of grate with open bars to the end, that the priceless treasures might be seen and not soiled, the old man had no sooner opened the door of this place than the doctor and his companions were in at his heels. Without giving him time to question them, they effectually silenced him by knocking

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him down with the wooden mallet. They then instantly made flat the bows of the Crown, so as to make it more portable, seized the sceptre and dove, put them into the wallet together, and were preparing to make their escape, when, unfortunately for them, the old man's son, who had not been at home for ten years, came from sea in the very nick of time, and being told that his father was with some friends, who would be very glad to see him at the Jewel office, he posted thither immediately, and met Blood and his companions coming out. Instead of returning and securing him, as they ought to have done, they pushed forward with their prize in order to escape; but the young man perceiving his father weltering in his blood, and the treasure gone, instantly alarmed the nearest guard, who gave the signal to the rest, and the gates were shut and the three criminals taken. The man who held the horses fled upon the first rumour. Blood and his companions were searched and the prize was recovered, though all bruised and battered. One precious stone was lost, but this was afterwards found by a girl and restored. The prisoners were secured, and the King was communicated with for directions how to proceed.

His Majesty thought he would like to interrogate the prisoners himself. It was expected that Blood would meet with the severest punishment for one of the most daring offences ever heard of; but in the end the King not only pardoned him and his accomplices, but granted Blood a handsome pension for life. These facts caused great excitement, and many conjectures in the public mind; but the King's reasons were never understood. Blood afterwards became a person of great influence with Lady Castlemaine, and his aid was eagerly sought by persons who desired to succeed at Court.

Blood not long afterwards died of grief, having been convicted of a plot against the Duke of Buckingham, who brought a heavy action of *scandalum magnatum* against him, by which he was in danger of being imprisoned for life. Some persons regarded the action as a plot against him by his enemies, and said, that having escaped punishment for what he really did do, he was now to be punished for what he did not do. A word or two may be said of Blood's other plots. When Charles II. came to his own again, there were many disaffected English, Scotch, and Irish, who only wanted a leader to take them into action. Colonel Blood, having espoused their cause, was deemed a suitable leader, and as nothing could be attempted in England with the least probability of success, Ireland was selected for the scene of the rebellion. The Colonel deemed it of importance, by way of giving strength to their cause, that they should become possessed of some powerful fortress, and therefore planned the seizure of Dublin Castle. The attempt was fixed for the 29th of May, the anniversary of the King's return. It was arranged that Blood, with a

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company of resolute fellows, were, under the pretence of presenting a petition to the Duke of Ormonde, then Lord-Lieutenant, to have procured admittance and seized his person, while about fourscore chosen foot in the habit of tradesmen, were to have waited without, and upon a certain signal to have surprised the guards. The plot, however, by the treachery of one of the conspirators, having been defeated before it was ripe, a proclamation was issued, with a reward of five hundred pounds for the apprehension of any of the ringleaders. In consequence of this, a Mr. Lockey, Blood's brother-in-law, was taken, tried, and executed, but Blood himself contrived to effect his escape. But he made a determined resolution to be revenged upon the Duke of Ormonde, by whose vigilance his plans had been circumvented, and his relative hanged.

Yet it was not until nine years afterwards that he ventured to attempt anything upon the duke's person. Having engaged five of his old and trusty friends, on the 6th of December, 1670, they, being all well armed and mounted, beset the Duke's coach as he was passing from St. James's Palace through the long street that led to Clarendon House, where the Duke then resided. Having knocked out the flambeaux, and secured the attendants, they forced the Duke out of his coach, and actually tied him behind one of their associates, who was to have ridden with him without stopping till he came to an appointed place, where the rest of the band were to meet him, and consult as to what advantage they could make of their distinguished prisoner. But his Grace's porter, being apprised of his master's danger by a boy who concealed himself under the coach and escaped, seasonably came to his rescue. It is a very curious fact, notwithstanding, that none of the ruffians were ever apprehended, though a reward of £1,000 was offered, until the attempt already related discovered them. Even then they were all pardoned. The facts would seem to show that Blood was in possession of secret information of some kind of a most important nature—information that stood him in good stead whenever his neck was endangered, which, to do him justice, was very frequently the case.

We shall conclude our sketches of the Tower in a second article.

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DEDICATIONS.

At the present time a dedication is merely an eleemosynary compliment to the dedicatee, and the dedicator is, often, greatly exercised in his mind before he can finally determine on whom he will confer the supreme laudatory dole. His fancy hovers between Pylades and Orestes; who were his chums at Eton and at Oxford, and who, since he left college, have formed themselves into a Mutual Admiration Society, for his and their own glorification. But he knows that if he pays tribute to either he will offend the other; and that if he pays it to both, and, thereby, puts himself, as it were, under the protection of the "Great Twin Brethren," he will deeply offend Mentor, who has known him from his birth, and who, indeed, presented him with the conventional knife, fork and spoon, and moreover undertook that in due course of time he should "hear sermons." This undertaking has been faithfully carried out, for he has heard many sermons; and, therefore, it seems clear that his forthcoming work, on the "Influence of Mesopotamia on Religion," ought to be dedicated to Mentor, his earliest "guide, philosopher and friend." Thus, torn by conflicting emotions, he resolves, at length, to dedicate the precious volume to his aunt. In moments of effusive conversation with those amongst his friends who never knew his aunt, he has been wont to speak of her as his "Egeria;" and, therefore, the compliment will seem to be justly due to her, and it will have this great advantage, that it will enable him to silence any complaints from other friends with this quotation from Gay:

> "For when a lady's in the case
> All other things you know give place!"

So the prize falls to his aunt.

I need not tell the readers of Isaac D'Israeli, that our forefathers were in no such embarrassment. With them a dedication was a source of income to its author, and frequently produced more solid results than did the book which it preceded. This was in the days when Pope wrote:

> "Proud as Apollo on his forked hill
> Sat full-blown Bufo, puffed by many a quill,
> Fed with soft dedication all day long
> Horace and he went hand in hand in song."

Full-blown Bufo, we know, had to pay roundly for the pabulum

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which helped to swell his pride, and we cannot wonder that Pope should have added this half-contemptuous, half-generous fling at his brethren who were so diligently scrambling for the crusts which *he* did not require:

> "May some choice patron bless each gray goose quill;
> And every Bavius find a Bufo still."

Under these circumstances, an author had not so much difficulty in selecting a dedicatee, as in refraining from a more generous and profuse inscription of his work. If it were in twenty books he would dedicate each book to a different patron. I have even seen an illustrated Bible in which each of the plates is separately dedicated. D'Israeli does not seem to have seen this book, but I have a special interest in it, because a namesake of mine was honoured by the dedication of the plate entitled, "Balaam's Ass Speaketh!" Let me hope that the compliment was not prophetical.

It is not my intention, however, in the following pages to allude, except incidentally, to those dedications which were purely, and even confessedly, "*Pot Boilers.*"

If Isaac D'Israeli has not absolutely exhausted this part of the history of dedications, he has, at least, not left much for the gleaners who come after him. The dedications, to which I shall allude, will either be those which introduce quaint books in a quaint manner, or those which in one way or another deviate from the conventional form of dedication. I take it that Blaise de Vigenère, a voluminous writer of curious books, must be considered as having deviated very considerably from the conventional form, when in 1586 he dedicated his *Treatise on Secret Writing* (*Traité des Chiffres*) to the Chancellor Séguier. At the outset of his very curious and valuable book, Blaise de Vigenère addresses the "Very virtuous, very prudent and learned nobleman, Monsieur Antoine Séguier, Privy Councillor and Councillor of State, and Prévôt and Viscount of Paris," and then calmly proceeds to write *at* the very virtuous, &c., &c., through more than three hundred closely-printed quarto pages: in fact the whole book is made to serve as a dedication. It seems to me that Chancellor Séguier must have felt, when this elephantine compliment was falling upon him, much as poor Tarpeia must have felt when the Sabines were showering down upon her the rewards, which they had promised her for her treachery. In direct contra-distinction to the work and dedication of Blaise de Vigenère I place the dedication written by a modern scholar to usher in a book entitled *Méditations Bosphoriques;* which overflows with information and with erudition. The author still lives, but his book, notwithstanding his apology to the Perotes, fell very flat, and never had the success due to its merits. Possibly the author may have

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taken too favourable a view of his own linguistic acquirements, but he assuredly is a good Oriental scholar and archæologist.

This is his dedication,

"To Monsieur André Sepsi.

"My Dear Friend:

"I dedicate to you this work of which you are already acquainted with some fragments.

"You are perhaps aware, that I once sent some portions of it to a Journal, and that they were received with the most sublime indifference. Eh! What! you smile? Are not a much greater amount of talent, wit, and above all of erudition required to chronicle the movements of the knives and forks at such and such a Lord's table during the past week than to compile a work like the accompanying:—'Synoptical Table of the literature of the most remarkable Ancient and Modern Languages;—especially of the Hebrew; Rabbinical; Armenian; Sanscrit; Chinese; Archaïc; Greek; Servian; Gallic; Modern Greek; Latin; French; Italian; Polish; Spanish; Portuguese; German; English; Russian; Moldavian; Wallachian; Arabic; Persian; Turkish, and of some other Oriental Dialects. . . .' You will find in my work some sallies against the Perotes, but I hasten to warn you that there are amongst them many talented men whom I respect, and who are perhaps much better worth than the many travellers who confuse them so readily with the rest." . . . .

The author of this curious dedication speaks and writes English, but his force in English is not perfect. I give here in his own precise words, and in his own spelling, a translation which he offers of a poem rendered by him into English from the Persian:

"The Sun and the Cloud.

"A cloud which, by the reverberation of radiant sun's rays, with moveable silver his extremities adorned, imposed upon the ephemeral splendour with which grew embellisched, began to boast of it, and cried out: my brighteness hass not a beginning. The gold-haired Phœbus, hearing with indignation these imprudent words, for punishment of the haugthy cloud, from the his flaming disc a torrent of revengeful rays trew up with violence, and the cloud, after the pot of the his dazzling splendour, grown pale; weak; and without connection into rain, was transformed.

"How many fools boast of an ephemeral splendour! their brightness in a moment disappears. That verity in the court is evident."

It is perhaps not wonderful that this worthy philologist's *Méditations Bosphoriques* were re-christened by the outraged Perotes under the title of *Méditations Phosphoriques!* Still, his book is a good book and deserves to be better known.

I have observed throughout my life, that the officials of many

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foreign nations imagine that they can write English better than we English can write it for ourselves. I will give a crucial instance of this. I remember that, some years ago, the Prussian Post-office applied to the English Post-office for an explanation of the English system of Money-Order business. The request was addressed in very fluent German, but the Prussians thought that they had been too hard on the English in sending all their questions in German and therefore they addressed them over again in what they supposed to be English thus: "What is the height of the Money-Order at the To-Pay?"

I come now to dedications of a very different kind. Sir Thomas Herbert who travelled in Asia and Africa from the year 1625 to the year 1637, and who dedicated his very interesting account of his travels in the year 1638 to his kinsman, Philip Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, was, like most of the Herberts, a man of mark. On his return from his travels he sided with the Parliamentary party against Charles the First, but when that monarch was a prisoner he was selected, probably through the influence of his early friend, Fairfax, to attend upon him. He was with Charles when the king took leave of his children, and, being a very humane and sympathetic man, was much affected by the scene which he witnessed. He was with Charles on the scaffold, and his account of the last days of the unhappy monarch is a valuable contribution to the history of the period. The "Earl of Pembroke," to whom Sir Thomas Herbert dedicated his account of his travels, was the grandson of the lady whom Ben Jonson commemorated as "Sydney's sister, Pembroke's mother," and of whom he wrote:

> "Death! ere thou hast slain another,
> Wise and good and fair as she,
> Time shall throw his dart at thee!"

This lady was well matched into the house of the Herberts, which ever was, and has continued to be a princely house, conpicuous in its patronage of literature and the arts. When Sir Thomas Herbert addressed the following dedication to his kinsman he was not writing to a "full-blown Bufo," from whom he expected guerdon or remuneration, but to a kinsman capable of appreciating his labours and his writings, and he wrote thus quaintly:

"My Lord—

"Having past the pikes I take new courage to come again. One blow more and I have done. Ten to one it lights on my own pate: but if my head stand free, my hand shall not bee guilty of more intrusion. No more pressure to the presse; the crowd is too strong already; and I will get out by head and shoulders rather than faile.

"Your Lordship's word may passe for me: and I dare not break it. Greatnesse hath a great stroak over men, but goodnesse a greater;

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men choosing to obey for love rather than feare. In both you have a strong interest, and in both sorts of men they have taken possession, and like twyns grow up together: *quambene convenient*, and may their residence be as immovable as your constancy to good: yea may the title of plain dealing and honest man bee the worst reproach, malice and double dealing can fix upon your name and memory, who have gained much honour and ease too, in court, and country, by that excellent dialect and generale beliefe.

"The Dedication, like a fayre frontispiece to a mean house, or a beautifull signe to an ill lodging, hath tempted travellers to look in and make some stay: but I feare to have used my readers, as my host, like the guests that set a mark on the doore, to passe by, and call in no more. 'Tis my feare only; which being begot of modesty, may serve to invite the best and most ingenious company.

"To please all is my desire; but, my choice, a few, taking the bigger number to bee the lesser in vertue, and swollen only with a timpany of wind and water. The boat is in your Lordship's hand, which steares as you direct it. Yours is the greatest enterest: you are our Chiefe: yours is the leading judgement: do but approve, the mark is hit, and you make many followers, which is the request of your Lordship's

"Humblest servant
"THO. HERBERT."

It was in the fashion in those days, for the friends of authors to send them commendatory verses for insertion after the dedication or preface to the forthcoming works. Many such were sent to Sir Thomas Herbert, and from them I select some lines written by Lord Fairfax, the victor on the field of Naseby.

"TO THE READER:

"Hear Thou, at greater ease than Hee,
Mayest behold what Hee did see;
Thou participates his gaines
But Hee alone reserves the paines
Hee traded not with luker sotted;
Hee went for knowledge and Hee got it.
Then thank the author! Thanks is light
Who hath presented to thy sight
Seas; Lands; Men; Beastes; Fishes; Birdes;
The rarest that the world affords."

If Fairfax had not been better as a general than as a poet, it is not probable that he would have conquered at Naseby.

"Silver-tongued Sylvester's" translation of Du Bartas, absolutely bristles with "dedications," anagrams, and commendatory verses.

I have before me an early copy (1611) which apparently belonged to a Mr. Mascall, who has recorded on the margins of its pages, the dates of the birth of his own children, the date of the execution of Charles the First; and various particulars as to his own household expenses, which I need not notice until the *History of Marginalia* comes to be written. I propose, however, to note from "Sylvester"

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simply one copy of his commendatory lines, which are written in what Charles Lamb would have called the pyramidal style of poetry,—as thus:

"ENGLAND'S
Apelles [rather
OUR APOLLO]
WORLD'S wonder
SIDNEY,
that rare more-than-man,
This LOVELY VENUS
first to LIMNE beganne,
With such a PENCILL
as no PENNE dare follow.
How then shold I, in Wit and art so shallow,
Attempt the Task which yet none other can?
Far be the thought, that mine unlearned hand
His heavenly labour should so much unhallow.
Yet, lest [that Holy RELIQUE being shrin'd
In som High-Place, close lockt frò common light]
My country-men shold bee debarr'd the sight
Of these DIVINE pure beautics of the Minde;
Not daring meddle with APELLES TABLE;
This have I muddled, as my MUSE was able."

Silver Tongued's anagrams on the name of James the First are perhaps well known. "James Stuart," produced in English "*A Just Master*," and in Latin "*Justa scrutabo*." Now these are very good anagrams, and justify me in extracting from Sylvester the following verses, whereof one has no less a signature than that of Ben Jonson. The lines by Ben Jonson, though probably perfunctory, have all the poet's fire. Just as Mrs. Siddons could not help herself to potatoes without stabbing them, and made a footman faint when she asked him, in terrible tones, for a glass of beer; so Ben Jonson, when he was set to hack work of this kind, could not control his genius and wrote like a scholar:

"ANAGRAMMATA REGIA
REGI
"JACOBUS STUART
JUSTA SCRUTABO

"JAMES STUART
A JUST MASTER.

"For a just master have I labour'd long;
To a just master have I vow'd my best;
By a just master should I take no wrong;
With a just master would my life be blest;
In a just master are all vertues met;
From a just master flows abundant grace;
But a just master is so hard to get,
That a just master seems of Phœnix Race;
Yet a just master have I found in fine;
Of a just master if you question this,
Whom a just master I so just define;
My Liege James Stuart a just Master is;
An a just master could my work deserve
Such a just master would I justly serve."

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"EPIGRAM

"To M. Joshua Sylvester.

"If, to admire were to command, my praise
Might then both thee, thy work and merit raise,
But, as it is [the child of ignorance,
And utter stranger to all ayre of France]
How can I speake of thy great paines but erre?
Since they can onlie judge that can confer.
Behold! the reverend shade of Bartas stands
Before my thought and [in thy right] commands,
That to the world I publish, for him, this;
Bartas doth wish thy English now were His
So well in that are his intentions wrought,
As his will now be the translation thought;
Thine the originale; and France shall boast
No more, those mayden glories she hath lost.

"B. Jonson."

It is only reasonable that an author should seek to enforce in his dedication the opinions set forth in his book, and this the Jesuit Father, Justinian of Tours, was careful to do when in 1688 he published, under his pseudonym of Michel le Fébre, his *Théatre de la Turquie*. The Father had lived long and travelled much in Turkey, and his bulky quarto volume is nothing else than a voluminous indictment of the Turks; a prediction of the downfall of the Turkish Empire, and a trumpet call to its enemies to attack it. He dedicated his work, which is full of curious matter, to Louvois, the powerful minister of Louis the Fourteenth, and in the dedication he urged the minister to impress upon his Royal master that it was obligatory on him, as the most Christian King, to put himself forward as the Champion of Christendom, and to drive the Turks from Turkey. Justinian of Tours was not the only person of importance who sought to urge Louis the Fourteenth to undertake this task.

Sixteen years before Justinian wrote, The Chevalier d'Arvieux, who was an envoy from Louis, had urged him to blockade the Dardanelles and seize on Smyrna and the Islands; and, at the same time, the philosopher Leibnitz had urged him to make himself master of Egypt. Under these circumstances a brief quotation from Justinian's dedication will not be out of place. The good Father, no less than D'Arvieux and Leibnitz, was confident that an attack on Turkey must be successful. "Monseigneur," he wrote, "You will find in my *Théatre de la Turquie*, a long series of calamitous events, and tragic catastrophes. You will see in it the decadence of a great empire, which was, heretofore formidable to Christendom, but which is to-day reduced to such an extremity as to be no more than the shadow of its former self. You will read of the ruin of many provinces, cities, and fortresses and, as a natural consequence, of the feebleness of the Grand Turk and the small number of his subjects, and the insufficiency of his finances. You will also perceive that fourteen nations, or sects,

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differing in their Religion, their Rites, their Languages, and their manners, are collected in Turkey, but that though in most matters they are divided amongst themselves; they are all united in hostility to the monarch who governs them; whom they most ardently desire to be destroyed, and exterminated, in order that they may regain their ancient Religion and Liberty. Your zeal, Monseigneur, for the Glory of God, and the influence which you possess with his Majesty, may contribute greatly to the furtherance of this grand exploit, and to this glorious conquest which has been reserved for our invincible monarch, who, aided by your wise and prudent counsels, by your indefatigable vigilance and by the admirable skill which you have displayed in the direction of his armies, has triumphed over nations far more powerful than the Turks." The praises of Justinian were well deserved, for Louvois was an able man, and a great war minister, but nothing came of them for, only three years after the dedication was written, Louvois died of the grief which the displeasure of the Grand Monarque had caused him.

Much about the same period J. W. Gent issued the *Systema Agriculturæ*, which was published in 1681.

Strangely enough the book itself is not mentioned by Lowndes, although it has great merits. My copy, in addition to the ordinary imprint, has a date in manuscript of the 6th July, 1681; but I am unable to state how it reached Constantinople, where I purchased it, and where, in spite of its very great merits, it assuredly has borne no fruit, as we have very little agriculture, and absolutely no system. The *Systema Agriculturæ* is enriched with a curious frontispiece, which is intended to give the reader a bird's-eye view of a rural estate, but as I cannot well put this frontispiece before my readers, and as moreover it does not seem to me to be precisely what it professes to be—that is "The mystery of Husbandry, discovered, and laid open," I must fall back upon J. W., who, following the example of the children who write, under their imperfect imitations of Apelles and Raphael, "This is a dogge," or, "This is a catte," has favoured his readers with the following rather pretty and certainly quaint.

"EXPLANATION

OF THE

FRONTISPIECE.

"First cast your Eye upon a Rustick Seat
Built plain and strong, yet well contrived and neat.
And situated on a healthy soyle,
Yielding much Wealth with little cost or toyl!
Near by it stand the Barns framed to contain
Enriching stores of Hay, Pulse, Corn, and grain
With Bartons large, and places where to feed
Your Oxen, Cows, Swine, Poultry, with their Breed.
On th' other side, hard by the house, you see
The apiary for th' industrious Bee.

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Walk on a little farther, and behold
A pleasant Garden; from high winds and cold
Defended by a spreading fruitful wall,
With rows of Limes and Fir-trees streight and tall;
Full fraught with necessary Flowers and fruits
And Nature's choicest sorts of Plants and Roots.
Beyond the same are crops of Beans and Pease,
Saffron and Liquorice; or such as these.
The orchards, so enricht with fruitful store,
Nature could give (nor they receive) no more;
Each tree stands bending with the weight it bears,
Of Cherries some, of Apples, Plums and Pears.
Not far from thence see other walks and rows
Of cyder-fruits, near unto which there flows
A gliding stream. The next place you discover
Is where St. Foyl, La Lucerne, hops and clover
Are propagated: near unto those fields
Stands a large Wood, Mast, Fuel, Timber yields.
In yonder vale, hard by the river stands
A water engine, *which the wind commands*
To fertilize the meads; on the other side
A Persian wheel is plac't both large and wide
To th' same intent: then do the fields appear
Cloathed with corn and grain for th' ensuing year;
The Pastures stockt with beasts, the Downs with sheep;
The Cart, the plough, and all good order keep;
Plenty unto the Husbandman, and gains
Are his rewards for's industry and pains
Peruse the Book, for here you only see
The following subject in Epitome!"

J. W., whoever he may have been, had in him some smattering of learning, in proof whereof I take from his quaint dedication to his abundantly useful book this very quaint passage:

"Pliny writes that the Romans had so high an esteem for agriculture, that their Laws did extend to the Reformation of the negligences and abuses in the exercise of that necessary and honourable art. The same author brings several Precedents of many worthy and honourable persons that addicted themselves unto and affected this Art, and highly sets forth the praise and commendation thereof; and shows how the Antient Romans did execute their Rustic-Laws, and encouraged the ingenious and industrious husbandman: As by the example of C. Furius Cretinus, who out of a small piece of ground gathered much more Fruits and Profits, than his neighbours about him out of their great and ample possessions, which highly contracted their envy and hatred against him, insomuch as they accused him, that by sorcery, charms, and witchcraft, he had transported his neighbours' fruits, fertility, and increase, into his own fields; for which he was ordered by Spurius Albinus, peremptorily, to answer the matter. He therefore fearing the worst, at such time as the Tribes were ready to give their voices, brought into the common place his Plough, and other Rural Instruments belonging to Agriculture, and placed them in the open face of the Court. He set there also his own Daughter, a lusty strong lass, and big of bone, well fed and well clad; also his oxen, full and fair: Then,

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turning to the Citizens of Rome; 'My Masters' (quoth he) 'these are the Sorceries, Charms, and all the Inchantements that I use: I might also allege my own Travel and Toyl, my early Rising, and late sitting up, and the painful sweat I daily endure; but I am not able to present these to your view, nor to bring them with me into this assembly.' Which when the people had heard they unanimously pronounced him not guilty; and he was highly commended of all persons for his Ingenuity and Industry."

Pontoppidan had no dedication, but merely a preface which is creditable to the learned and pious author. "My principal motive was," he writes, "to promote the glory of the Creator by a contemplation of His works. In the instructive book of Nature are many leaves which hitherto no mortal has perused thoroughly, though the present times are blessed with the happy advantage of all the important discoveries made in natural philosophy, since the commencement of this century, which are superior in number and merit to those of many preceding ages. These have been chiefly promoted by the learned societies now flourishing (A.D. 1751) in almost every country in Europe.

"I heartily join with the celebrated Linnæus in wishing that even those gentlemen in the universities, who are not peculiarly destined to physic or the like, but to the study and promulgation of the Word of God in some ministerial office, were directed to apply such a part of their academic years to physics as may equal, if not exceed, the time given *to metaphysics and logic*; these last not being so *indispensably necessary as the former, especially to those who are called to attend a country parish!*"

The reader of the foregoing quotation must remember that Pontoppidan was not only a learned but a devout and earnest bishop. It is only right that this honest effort of a pious and erudite churchman to give effect to the Psalmist's declaration that "The Heavens declare the glory of God" should be kept in remembrance. The good bishop's account of the *Kraken* has often been ridiculed, but it certainly demands further investigation. The survival of some individual specimens of creatures which we suppose to have been extinct before the historic period—such as, for instance, the megalosauri, plesiosauri and pterodactyls—down to the mythic period, is almost certain, and it is possible that some specimens may have endured until well within the historic period. The subject demands investigation. The great Irish elk, the aurochs and the mammoth were certainly living within the historic period, and it is possible that a careful study of the myths which relate to "dragons" and to "flying fiery serpents" may reveal other instances of survival.

Pierre Moet, a "sworn" Librarian, who in the year 1659 was carrying on business in Paris, near "le Pont St. Michel," and whose ensign (for every one had an ensign in those days) was the "Image of Saint Alexius," dedicated Brother Basile Valentine's

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Twelve Keys of Philosophy, together with the same author's *Azoth, or the Hidden Art of making the Philosophers' Stone*, to Sir Kenelm Digby. Basile Valentine was the pseudonym of a Benedictine monk, whose real name is not known, but who was certainly a special alchemist, and whose work is remarkably curious. Sir Kenelm Digby had resided in Paris during the Protectorate of Cromwell, and his own writings had attracted much attention. Thus, it was not unnatural that Pierre Moet should dedicate this work on alchemy to a man who notoriously carried about in his bonnet a similar bee, or that he should take occasion to praise Sir Kenelm's "Treatise on the *Powder of Sympathy*," or that he should urge him to take up his pen once more, and oblige his friends with "A Treatise on *Demoniacal Possession*," which he had promised them. Sir Kenelm, however, did not live long enough to redeem his promise. If Pierre Moet, Basile Valentine, and Sir Kenelm could have lived to our time, they would have found that no less a chemist than Sir Humphry Davy thought that the "transmutation of metals" was feasible, but that the cost of the operation would make it of no practical value. They would have found, too, that within the last few years, another scientific enquirer has arrived at the same conclusion. The researches of the alchemists resulted in many discoveries, besides that at which they aimed, but did not hit; but it may be that their object will even yet be accomplished.

Here I must conclude, with the brief expression of my hope that when my readers in future take up an old book they will not *skip* the dedication, but will carefully examine it, and annotate it by reference to other sources of information. If they do thus they will find more of the author in the dedication than in the book.

FRANK IVES SCUDAMORE.

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SIESTA.

FROM THE NORWEGIAN OF A. KIELLAND.

In an elegant bachelor's *appartement* in the Rue Castiglione sat a merry party at dessert.

Señor José Francisco de Silvis was a short, coal-black Portuguese of the sort that come from Brazil with incredible wealth, live an incredible life in Paris, and are particularly distinguished for their most incredible acquaintances.

In the little party there was scarcely one who knew his neighbour. With their host they had all picked up acquaintance either at a ball, or at a table-d'hôte, or simply upon the street.

Señor de Silvis laughed and talked loudly wherever he went, as rich foreigners often do; and as he could not reach up to the level of the Jockey Club, he contented himself with what he could find in the way of acquaintances; at once asked for their address, and the next day sent an invitation to a little dinner.

He spoke all languages—even German; and it was plain that he was not a little proud when he called across the table "Mein lieber Herr Doctor, wie geht's Ihnen?"

There was indeed a real German doctor among them, his face buried in a light red beard, and wearing that Sedan smile which characterizes all Teutons in Paris.

The temperature of the conversation rose with the champagne; fluent French and broken-backed French alternated with Spanish and Portuguese. The ladies lay back in their chairs and laughed; already they all knew each other well enough not to feel any constraint; jokes and *mots* were launched across the table and passed from mouth to mouth; "der liebe Doctor" alone disputed seriously with his neighbour, a French journalist with a red ribbon at his button-hole.

And there was one other who was not carried away with the general liveliness. He sat to the right of Mademoiselle Adèle, who had on her left her new lover, the fat Anatole, who had eaten too many truffles.

During dinner Mademoiselle Adèle had tried, by many innocent little artifices, to get a little life into her right-hand neighbour. But he remained quiet, answering her politely but shortly and in a low voice.

"Imagine first she took him for a Pole—one of these dreadfully

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tiresome people who go about posing as martyrs; but she soon saw that she was wrong, and that vexed Mademoiselle Adèle.

For it was one of her many specialities to be able to classify at once all the foreigners she came in contact with, and she used to assert that she could guess a man's nationality before she had spoken ten words to him.

But this taciturn stranger puzzled her dreadfully. If he had only been fair, she would have set him down at once as an Englishman, for he talked like one. But he had black hair, thick black moustaches, and was of small, delicate build. His fingers were remarkably long, and he had a strange habit of picking at his bread and playing with his dessert fork.

"He's a musician," whispered Mademoiselle Adèle to her fat friend.

"Ah!" answered Monsieur Anatole, "I'm afraid I've eaten too many truffles."

Mademoiselle Adèle whispered some good advice into his ear, at which he laughed and looked very much in love.

Meanwhile she could not give up the interesting stranger. After she had tempted him to drink several glasses of champagne, he became livelier and talked more.

"Ah!" she cried, suddenly, "I can hear by your accent: you are an Englishman, after all!"

The stranger blushed deeply, and answered quickly, "No, madame!"

Mademoiselle Adèle laughed. "I beg your pardon," she said, "I know Americans are angry when you take them for Englishmen."

"I am not an American either," answered the stranger.

This was too much for Mademoiselle Adèle. She leant over her plate, and looked sulky, for she saw that Mademoiselle Louison, who sat opposite, was rejoicing in her discomfiture.

The stranger understood it too, and added in a low voice, "I am an Irishman, madame."

"Ah!" said Mademoiselle Adèle, with a grateful smile, for she was easily appeased.

"Anatole! an Irishman, what is that?" she whispered.

"It is the name they give the poor people in England," he whispered, in reply.

"Oh!—hm!" and Mademoiselle Adèle raised her eyebrows, and cast a shy glance at her right-hand neighbour; her interest in him had subsided suddenly.

De Silvis's dinner was excellent. The party had been long at table, and when Monsieur Anatole thought of the oysters with which the feast had begun, they appeared to him like a delightful dream. Of the truffles, on the other hand, his recollection was only too clear.

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The actual eating was over; only now and then a hand was stretched out for a wine glass, a little fruit, or a biscuit.

The blonde and sentimental Mademoiselle Louison fell into reflections over a grape, which she had let drop into her champagne glass. Little clear air-bubbles began to form and cling to the skin, and when it was quite covered with the shining white pearls, they buoyed the heavy grape up through the wine to the surface.

"See!" said Mademoiselle Louison, turning her large swimming eyes towards the journalist; "see how white angels bear a sinner to heaven!"

"Ah! charming, Mademoiselle! what a sublime thought," cried the journalist, enraptured.

Mademoiselle Louison's sublime thought went the round of the table, and was much admired. Only the frivolous Adèle whispered to her fat lover, "It would take a good many angels to bear you, Anatole!"

In the meantime the journalist seized the opportunity to gain the general attention. He was glad to escape from a fatiguing political dispute with the German doctor; and as he had a red ribbon, and talked in the lofty newspaper style, everyone listened to him.

He enlarged upon the fact that little forces acting in unison can lift great burdens; and thence he passed to the theme of the day, namely, the great newspaper-subscriptions for the Parisian poor, and the sufferers by the floods in Spain.

On this subject he had a great deal to say, and every moment he said "we" of the Press, while he talked himself quite into a heat over "those millions, which we, by so great sacrifices, have succeeded in collecting."

But others too had something to say in the matter. Innumerable little touches of generosity were mentioned, which had distinguished these days of charitable pleasure-hunting.

Mademoiselle Louison's dearest friend, an insignificant lady, who sat near the foot of the table, told, in spite of Louison's protest, how she had asked three poor seamstresses up to her own apartments, and had set them to sew the whole night before the bazaar in the Hippodrome, and had given them supper and breakfast with coffee, as well as their ordinary pay.

Mademoiselle Louison became at once an important personage at the table, and the journalist began to pay her particular attention.

The many beautiful touches of benevolence, together with Louison's swimming eyes, produced in the whole company a quiet, contented and philanthropic frame of mind, which was eminently soothing after the exertion of dining.

And this luxurious feeling rose several degrees higher when the party had sunk into the soft chairs in the cool salon.

There was no light but that from the bright fire. The red glow

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fell upon the English carpet, upon the gold rings of the hangings, shone upon a gilded picture frame, upon the piano which stood opposite, and here and there upon a face further back in the darkness. For the rest, nothing was visible but the red ends of cigars and cigarettes.

The conversation died away; only a whisper was heard now and then, or the sound of a coffee-cup being laid on the table. They all seemed inclined for the undisturbed enjoyment of quiet digestion and their philanthropic frame of mind. Even Monsieur Anatole forgot his truffles, as he stretched himself in the low chair close to the sofa, where Mademoiselle Adèle had taken her place.

"Will no one give us a little music?" asked Señor de Silvis, from his chair. "You are always so obliging, Mademoiselle Adèle."

"Oh no, no," cried Mademoiselle, "not after dinner." And she lay back in the sofa, drew in her feet, and folded her hands in front of her in quiet satisfaction.

But the stranger, the Irishman, rose from his corner and went up to the instrument.

"Ah, will you play us something? A thousand thanks, monsieur—hm!" Señor de Silvis had forgotten his name; he not unfrequently forgot the names of his guests.

"I told you—he's a musician," said Mademoiselle Adèle to her friend. Anatole grunted his wonder at her penetration.

It needed no great penetration however. Every one got the same impression from the way he took his seat, and without any preparations struck a few chords here and there, as if to wake up the instrument.

Then he began to play, sportive, light, frivolous music, suited to the situation.

Melodies of the day whirled out and in among scraps of waltzes and snatches of songs—he wove together cleverly and flowingly all the trifles which Paris hums for a week and forgets.

The ladies gave little cries of admiration, hummed a few bars here and there, and beat time with their feet. The whole party followed the music with eager interest; he had hit the mood of the moment and carried them all with him from the beginning. Only "der liebe Doctor" listened with his Sedan smile; it was altogether too light for him.

But soon came something for the German too; he nodded now and again with a sort of appreciation.

A scrap of Chopin ducked up and fitted marvellously into the situation—the piquant perfume which filled the air, the pretty women, these men, all strangers to each other, yet so open and unconstrained, hidden in the twilight of the richly furnished salon, each following his own most secret thoughts, borne on the stream of the mysterious half-clear music, while the glow from

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the fire rose and fell, making every piece of gilding shine out through the darkness.

And there came more and yet more for the Doctor. From time to time he turned towards de Silvis and noted when there came "Anklänge," of "unser Schumann," "unser Beethoven," or even of "unser famosen Richard."

Meanwhile the stranger played on, evenly and without exertion, leaning slightly to the left so as to get power into the bass. It seemed as if he had twenty fingers, all of steel; he knew how to gather together the swarming sounds, and give the instrument a concentrated, powerful tone. Without a pause, without marking the transitions, by means of ever new surprises, hints and brilliant combinations, he kept up the interest so that even the least musical of his hearers followed with rapt attention.

But imperceptibly the music changed colour. The musician began more and more to use the lower octaves of the piano, bending more over to the left, and there began to be a wonderful unrest in the bass. The Anabaptists from "Le Prophète" marched on with heavy steps; a horseman, from the "Damnation de Faust," came tearing up from the depths in a limping, desperate, infernal gallop.

The rumbling down in the deeps grew stronger and stronger, and Monsieur Anatole began once more to feel the truffles troubling him. Mademoiselle Adèle sat up on the sofa; the music would not let her lie in peace.

Here and there the fire shone upon a pair of black eyes gazing at the player. He had enticed them on, and now they could not escape; he carried them ever downwards, downwards, to where there was a dull and dead mumbling as of threats and entreaties.

"Er führt 'ne famose linke Hand," said the Doctor.

But de Silvis did not listen to him; he sat, like all the rest, in breathless excitement.

A dim, oppressive terror passed out of the music and descended over them all. The musician seemed, with his left hand, to bind a knot which could never be loosed, while his right hand ran lightly, like tongues of flame, up and down the key-board. It sounded as if something terrible was being prepared in the cellar, while the people above sat drinking liqueurs and making merry.

A sigh, a half scream was heard from one of the ladies, who felt actually unwell; but no one heeded it. The player had now got right down into the bass, where he was working with both hands; and the untiring fingers whirled the tones together, so that a cold shiver ran down every one's back.

But through the threatening, growling sound in the depth there began to come an upward movement. The tones ran into each other, over each other—past each other—upwards, always upwards, yet seeming to make no way. Then followed a wild struggle to rise; the air seemed to swarm with little black figures, pulling and tearing

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at each other with raging eagerness and feverish haste—clambering, griping with hands and teeth, kicking each other, swearing, shrieking, praying—and ever his hands glided upwards, so slowly, so torturingly slowly.

"Anatole," whispered Mademoiselle Adèle, as pale as death, "he is playing Poverty!"

"Oh, these truffles!" moaned Anatole, and laid his hand on his stomach.

All at once the room was lighted up. Two servants with lamps and candelabras appeared at the door; and at the same moment the strange musician stopped, striking with all the might of his steel-fingers a discord so harsh, so startling, that the whole party sprang up.

"Out with the lamps!" cried de Silvis.

"No, no!" shrieked Mademoiselle Adèle. "Come with the lights; I dare not remain in the dark, Ouf! that horrible man!"

Who was it? Who was it? Without thinking, they all gathered around the host, and no one noticed that the stranger slipped out behind the servants.

De Silvis tried to laugh. "I think it must have been the devil himself," he said. "Come, let us go to the opera."

"To the opera! Not for anything," cried Louison. "I won't hear any music for a fortnight; and then the crowd on the staircase!"

"Oh, these truffles," groaned Anatole.

The party broke up. They had all been suddenly seized with a feeling that they were strangers in a strange place, and each wanted to go quietly home.

When the journalist conducted Mademoiselle Louison to her carriage, he said, "You see this is the consequence of having anything to do with these half-savages; you are never sure of the company you meet."

"No; he entirely ruined the charming mood I was in," said Louison, sadly, and turned her swimming eyes towards him. "Will you come with me to La Trinité? I know there is a service at twelve o'clock."

The journalist bowed and stepped into the carriage.

But when Mademoiselle Adèle and Monsieur Anatole drove past the English druggist's, in the Rue de la Paix, he told the coachman to stop, and said beseechingly to her, "I think I must get something for the truffles; you'll excuse me, won't you? That music, you see——"

"By all means, *mon ami*," she replied. "Between ourselves, I don't think any of us are fit for very much this evening. Good night—*à demain!*"

She leant back in the carriage, relieved to be alone; and the frivolous creature cried as if she was being beaten while she drove homewards.

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Anatole was no doubt troubled by the truffles, yet he seemed to get better the moment the carriage rolled away.

Since they made each other's acquaintance, they had never been so pleased with each other as at that moment when they parted.

The one who had come best out of it was "der liebe Doctor;" for, being a German, he was hardened to music.

Yet he determined to stroll along to the Brasserie Müller in the Rue Richelieu, to get a proper glass of Seidel-beer, and perhaps a little bacon, after it all.

WILLIAM ARCHER.

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THE LOST ECHO.

PART I.

THE DECORATION.

No further than the flight of a musket bullet from the town of Clonmore, stood, on an upland plain, a remarkable eminence, formed of clay, sand and gravel, called Fairy Hill. The town of Clonmore is in the county Tipperary, Fairy Hill is in the county Waterford, and between the two flows the silvery river Suir, forming the boundary of the counties.

Fairy Hill was one of the best known sights in the immediate neighbourhood of the town. It rose about seventy feet above the upland plain, and from its summit one could see many miles of the fertile land of Tipperary, lonely Sleive-Na-mon, and the rolling hills of Waterford at the rear.

Fairy Hill was not only distinguished by the peculiarities which nature had given it, but also by the fact that legend had busied itself in its regard, and the popular belief among the simple folk who passed it by was, that at night its slopes and summit were chosen meeting places of the fairies. Hence its name.

By daytime it was a favourite haunt, not of Titania and Oberon, or Robin Good-fellow and Puck, but of the substantial fairies, the little children of the town, who, in the summer-time, came in large numbers, and ran up and down the slopes of the Hill, from morning till night. It was a famous place for children. There were bushes to hide behind, crannies to conceal oneself in, mounds that might serve as a citadel to the King of the Castle, and be stormed with shrill bravery and much display of valour. Although it was thirty miles from the sea, marine shells might be found on it, and pebbles of wonderful shape and colour. It had slopes which, it was supposed, no lad who had not agility and strength and enterprise far beyond the ordinary, could ascend, but the most remarkable thing about the whole place was the echo.

At the side of the Hill facing Clonmore the material of which it was formed varied from that of the mass. Here rose an irregular cleft, the sides of which were lined with fine clay. The top of this cleft was the only part of the Hill which might be dangerous to children; for the summit overhung the base. Across the top a wooden paling had been erected to prevent children approaching the edge of the cliff.

The echo, which gave the greatest distinction to Fairy Hill,

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slept in that clay-lined cleft, and might be awakened by standing on the lower ground, about eighty yards from the cleft, and sending the voice towards the opening. Most boys, destined to be worth much in after life, are imaginative, and although John Nugent, of Clonmore, may not be destined to discharge any great function, fill any high place, he had a most fiery and ungovernable imagination when he was at the ripe age of twelve.

John Nugent, although by no means the eldest boy in his class at school, led his class in all sports and pastimes, and had a considerable influence on the rest of the school. The secret of this was, that he never did anything in a half-hearted way. Whatever he attempted, he began with a dash, and kept up his enthusiasm until he had accomplished his end. He had no love of mischief for mischief's sake, but he was not over-scrupulous, and he had been known to do many things which, from a master's point of view, were wicked, and deserving of the high censure of the cane.

He had played truant more than once, when it was supposed that the orchard of his neighbour had exercised an unholy fascination upon him. Twice he had had black eyes, and three times other boys who had come into momentary contact with his fist had had black eyes also. He had scaled the playground wall, and put putty in the ink bottles. A common clay pipe had been found in his pocket. He had frequently been caught in the act of throwing books at the head of a highly detestable monitor. On the playground walls he had chalked vile caricatures and written bitter libels of the same monitor. Under extreme irritation, he had been known to express himself in terms of severe contempt of the head master.

He had organised a fight between his own school and an opposition seminary. This was none of your white-livered fights, none of your bouts of mere fisticuffs. In arranging the preliminaries of the fight, he had stipulated for the use of sticks and stones. The fight took place on Fairy Hill, every combatant bringing his own stick, and trusting for stones to the Hill itself. The great event came off on a Saturday afternoon, to the extreme terror of the nursemaids and the less blood-thirsty young people. It lasted an hour, and then the enemy drew off his forces in a disorganised condition, and fell back upon the nearest apothecary's shop for a pennyworth of sticking plaster.

In that affray, John Nugent received a severe cut on the head. He was hand-to-hand in cudgel play with a foe of superior stature. The cudgel knocked off his straw hat, and just at that moment a ragged stone, thrown from some distance in front, tore his scalp. For a moment, his arm dropped; his adversary's blackthorn came down on his left shoulder with stinging pain. But the blow served only to infuriate him. Once more he engaged his enemy, and before half a minute the conflict was decided in the favour of Nugent.

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Now this matter of the scalp wound, would not, under ordinary circumstances, have had any terror for him. But the evening of this particular Saturday he had promised to go to a children's party at Mrs. Musgrave's, and it now became a question whether he could or not.

He went to the family apothecary (every family of any respectability in Clonmore has an apothecary), explained to him that he had a cut head, and wanted to go to the party at Mrs. Musgrave's that night.

The old man examined the wound, asked some questions, and said that he could manage so that the white patch might be concealed by John's long, curly hair.

This was accomplished, and duly, at eight o'clock, young Nugent found himself in Mrs. Musgrave's drawing-room.

As a rule, John Nugent, entertained a supreme contempt for girls. He had the usual boyish scorn of their softness, their dread of hardship or danger, their inability to use a pocket knife with reasonable skill, the positively revolting attempts they made at throwing a stone, their degrading ignorance of all field lore, their passion for tidiness, their horror of muddy boots. To this comprehensive contempt there was one exception.

He had no contempt whatever for Mary Musgrave, the only daughter of her house. There were many things in her favour. She was accounted the prettiest little girl in Clonmore. She was tall and lithe and agile. She was pale without being pallid. She had merry, wild hazel eyes, and a spirit full of harmless mischief. Without having the boldness of a boy, she had sympathy with their spirit. She would not like to look at danger, but she loved, like Desdemona, to hear, of perils past.

Of course it was impossible that the fame of that day's fight should not already have reached the ears of many of the young people in Mrs. Musgrave's drawing room, and when John Nugent entered there was a buzz among the whole assembly.

Two or three of the boys, who knew him best, came up to him, squaring their shoulders, and assuming heroic attitudes, as though they, by their very present valour, were entitled to participate in his fame.

They asked questions of the fight, who were there, who were hurt, who behaved pluckily, who ran away.

He made little of the whole affair, called it only a scrimmage, and, although evidently pleased with the prominence it gave him that evening, depreciated the whole affair.

Meanwhile, the little maidens stood aloof, contemplating him half in admiration, half in fear. They had a vague notion that at any moment the dreadful event at Fairy Hill that day might be there and then repeated. They had no clear notion that a boy whose glory it was to fight could control the natural ardour of his blood, because he happened to be in a drawing-room and girls

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happened to be present. On coming in, Mary Musgrave had given him her hand without saying a word. She was too overwhelmed by the sense of his glory to speak. By-and-by the news of his wound got about and she marvelled to see him laughing and shaking his curls as though a fight and a wound were the finest things going, instead of being enough to frighten the life out of one.

That evening he was the hero of the party by reason of his valour, and she the heroine, by reason of her beauty, and once, when they were in one of the rooms alone together, she said—

"John, I suppose when you grow up you'll be a real soldier, and wear a real sword and fight in real battles, like the battles of Hastings and Prestonpans?"

"I don't know that I shall, Mary," he said, with careless superiority.

Then all at one her face lighted up, and she said, eagerly, "John, when real soldiers fight in real battles don't they get medals?"

"Yes, child, of course they do," he answered, patronisingly.

Then she laughed and clapped her hands and said, "Wait here for me," and ran out of the room.

She came back breathless in a few minutes, saying, as she shook her dark hair round her bright face, "Then you shall have a medal for to-day's battle," and before he knew what she was about she had pinned upon his coat a piece of red ribbon from which hung an old Crimea medal. "Now," she cried, "come in to the rest," and laughed and clapped her hands again.

He looked down, and blushed and said, "No, no, I won't go in. How silly." Then looking closely at the medal, he said, "Why, this is one just like Flynn the old pensioner has. He got it in the Crimea War. Do you know, Mary, this is silver? Do you mean me to keep it?"

"Yes, yes," she said, still laughing.

There was a sore struggle in the boy's mind. He would have liked a keepsake, howsoever trifling, but into the other room he would not go with this glittering and dangling on his coat. "May I put it in my pocket?" he said, blushing.

"Yes," she answered, all the light of laughter leaving her face. "But that will be stupid," she added, tossing her head, and leading the way to the room where all the other children were.

"Where did you get it, Mary?" he said, as they walked down the passage.

"Mamma gave it to me," she said. "It was my big doll's watch."

The fact that this medal had anyway been connected with a doll deprived it of all its military value in the boy's esteem. Still he cherished it as a keepsake from Mary, and concealed it in the secret drawer of his desk, out of which he occasionally took it to

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show it to some companion and relate such adventures in connection with it as his imagination could supply. But he never imparted, even to his closest friend, that it had been bestowed upon him by Mary Musgrave as a decoration for his first battle.

PART II.

THE PROPHETIC ECHO.

"NONSENSE, it is far too early. Why it is not nine o'clock yet, and it will not be dark for an hour. Bill is the best fellow in the world. He told me he would play a game at billiards, and meet me here at ten o'clock. Let us go for a stroll till then. It would be perfect waste of a lovely evening like this for you to go home so early. Let us go on the Fairy Hill road and come back here to the bridge by ten. Then you can go home with Bill, and——" the young man paused and by way of ending his sentence, hummed a few bars of a tune which the band had just been playing.

"And what?" the girl said, with a half-amused, half-frightened laugh.

"And I shall be greatly delighted and much obliged to you." This time his voice was grave and rich.

"Oh, Jack!" she said, "I am afraid."

"What," he cried, altering his manner suddenly, "of the fairies? I assure you, Miss Musgrave, fairies have turned quite obliging of late, and always keep out of sight, You will come, won't you? We do not often see a lovely night like this, and have now so seldom an opportunity of——" He repeated the air with which he had ended his previous broken sentence.

"Of what?" she cried; "I hate unfinished sentences."

"Are you sure you would not hate finished sentences more?" he asked, with anxious tenderness.

"I really must go home," she said, but with no great determination in her voice.

"I will finish the sentence for you if you promise not to be angry with me."

"If you think there is any chance of my being angry with you why should you risk finishing the sentence?"

"Because I would risk anything, except your anger, to say what is in my thoughts."

There was a pause. By this time the two young people had turned their backs upon the town, and although she had never given verbal consent to joining him in his stroll, they were walking in the direction he had indicated, down the Fairy Hill road. After a little while the silence became oppressive to the girl, and she said, with a forced laugh, "Have you ever seen me angry?"

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"No," he answered, "but I hope I often may."

"You hope you may often see me angry! That is a strange hope." Again with a laugh, "Why do you hope you may often see me angry?"

"Because I assume you will be often angry during your lifetime."

Another silence followed this. The girl could not speak now. She knew her voice would tremble if she did, and her thoughts were all in confusion, and the faculty of fitting words to her confused thoughts had deserted her. He broke the silence.

"I have now so seldom an opportunity of a walk and a chat with you that I am quite jealous of my boyish self, when I was quite free to be with you all day long, and get wild flowers and blackberries for you up the glen. Those far-off times now seem to me to have moved to some rich, full melody, and now——"

"Now," she whispered, tremulously.

"Everything seems stirred by a monotonous discord that begins with waking and ends with sleeping, and it is only in sleep that I once more hear the melody of long ago. For then in my dreams I forget the years that divide me from the past." He had said these words quietly and slowly, as if speaking in a reverie. Suddenly his manner altered and he spoke in a lively, animated tone, "You remember the day we boys had the famous fight up there?" waving his hand in the direction of Fairy Hill.

"Oh, yes," she said, "and you were hurt."

"Well," he resumed, dropping again into the tone of reverie, "in those days my ambition was to be a mighty captain, the leader of successful hosts, the director of invincible operations against a valiant but ever-conquerable foe. I have lost all that boyish ambition now. The day of that fight I was twelve years old. I am ten years older now, and instead of going to fields of martial glory, I am about to set out for India, the grave of the European."

Insensibly she drew a little nearer to him, and whispered—though there was no need for whispering, for no one was in view—

"Why must you go to that dreadful place?"

"Because," he went on, as though the words he uttered were of little interest to himself, and could be of no interest to any one lese, "I am alone in the world. My only chance of a career lies there. The little money that was mine is gone, and I must go, or stay here all my life upon so wretched few pounds a-year that can be earned by quill-driving."

She could not repress a sigh. His case seemed very hard indeed. It was cruel to think that the handsomest, gayest, cleverest, kindest, best young man in Clonmore, should be obliged to go away for ever, while the dull and the heavy and the uninteresting remain to prosper, merely because they had money or position.

"But of course," she said, "you will make a whole lot of money

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there, and come home some day to dear Clonmore and the Suir, and the hills."

"Ay," he said; "when my hair is white—that is, if I live till then; when the hills will be only a spectacle to me, and the river no longer a source of bracing exercise, but merely a smooth highway for an invalid."

"You should not take such a gloomy view."

"It was not kind of me, I own," he said, "to ask you to come for this walk, and then entertain you with my gloom. But," he added, "the time of going is now so near I feel almost in despair."

"But," she said, "Bill tells me you will get long holidays often."

"I shall be entitled to holidays after three years; but why should I come home—home! I have no home! Why should I return at the end of three years? Have we gone far enough this way? Shall we turn? Bill will be at the bridge at ten."

"Oh, yes; by all means let us get back; I had forgotten."

"Do you forget readily?"

"No, not readily," she said, in a puzzled tone of voice.

"And suppose," he said, "now that I am going away, I gave you something to keep for me for three years, do you think you would remember about it when I came back?"

"Oh, yes," she said, "I most certainly should."

She laughed uneasily.

"But," he said, "I assure you this is the most precious possession I have. Everything else I possess in the world is nothing compared with it."

"If it is so very valuable," she said, in perplexity, "I should be fearful of losing it."

"If I thought there was any fear of your losing it I would never entrust it to you."

"Then I will not take it," she said.

"Miss Musgrave," he said, deliberately, "what I thought of asking you to take care of for me was an old Crimea medal, which somehow or another I became possessed of when I was young. It is true, if you took it you might lose it, without intending to lose it; but there is one other thing you might keep for me, if you would, and when I tell you what that is you will know how I value it."

"What is it?" she whispered.

He stretched out his hand and took her's in his:

"This."

She did not withdraw her hand.

"Mary, will you?"

"I will."

It was quite dark when they came abreast of Fairy Hill. While they had been walking the sky had gradually become overcast, and now there was no light.

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"Did you ever know," he said, "that this echo changes in a most wonderful way at night?"

"No," she laughed.

"Oh, yes," he said, "'tis one of the most extraordinary things in the country. The fools," he went on, "who believe in fairies are too timid to test the echo in the dark, and sensible people have no care for such experiments. You are not afraid of fairies?"

"No," she said, blithely.

"Then let us go and try it."

They turned to the left and went up the broad open way leading to the Hill. He knew every inch of the way, and drew up at the proper distance from the cleft.

"Now," he said, "observe!" and turning his face towards the hill, he said, "John!" "John," said the echo back. "Now, Mary, put your fingers in your ears. 'Nugent!'" he called out, and drew her hands down from her ears, so that she only heard the echo of the word "Nugent."

"Now," said he, "call out 'Mary.'" The echo came back, "Mary." "Put your fingers in your ears once more."

As she did so he pitched his voice high, so that it might seem to be a woman's, called out, "Nugent!" and then quickly drew down her hands.

"Nugent," came back the echo.

"You see," he said, "this is the only really prophetic echo in Ireland. It said 'Mary Nugent' quite plainly, didn't it?"

"Yes," she laughed; "but the 'Nugent' was the echo of your voice."

"Well," he laughed also, "Mary, when next we come here, perhaps you will not be shy of doing without my assistance when you want the echo to say 'Mary Nugent.'"

PART III.

THE SILENT HILL.

THAT night there was not in Clonmore a happier man than John Nugent. It is true he had years of exile and of banishment from Mary before him, but, although at twenty-two, three years seem longer than later on in life, the conversation of that evening and the fact that Mary had accepted him had made him indifferent to every other consideration. He was young and healthy and full of hope, and when he came back at the end of three years, although he should not be rich, he would be in the enjoyment of an income to his mind sufficient for both. He would then be entitled to a year's holiday. He would have saved some money in the meantime. With this money saved, and his pay, which would run on during the year, they might do what they liked, go

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where they pleased. It is true they would have to return to India, but then it would be to an augmented salary.

The next morning broke warm and fair. He had nothing to do. He rose early, and went out. Often before, he had got up shortly after daylight, in order that he might pass by the house where she lived, although there was no prospect of seeing her at the time. Now it seemed sweeter than ever to be near her; for, although there was no chance of her appearing, he could whisper to his heart as he passed the place, "This is where *my* Mary lives."

What a difference that little word "my" made in his life. Of old, no doubt, he used it in his heart before her name; but he used it furtively, stealthily, and had a mixed feeling of audacity and intrusion when he whispered it to himself. But now he could call it out loud, with all the emphasis of love, all the pride of certainty.

In that early morning walk he made up his mind that he would behave in the most straightforward way in this matter. He would that very day see Mary's father and tell him what his hopes and expectations were. He had no hesitation or diffidence in this matter. For although Mary's father was one of the richest men in Clonmore, he had had a humble origin. Young Nugent knew Mr. Musgrave could give his daughter a handsome fortune. He should have been deaf to gossip if he had not heard that. But with the enthusiasm of a lover he resolved to say he wanted no money with Mary and would take none. It was well known in Clonmore that Mr. Musgrave loved money, and in the ardour of his love and youth, the young man made sure that the disinterestedness of his motives would win the father to his suit.

He waited until evening before making his proposal. Then, when he knew that Mary and William were out, Mrs. Musgrave according to her custom, in the drawing-room, and the old man dosing over a newspaper in the dining-room, he called.

He was at once shown in. The old man rubbed his eyes and greeted him cordially. For a few minutes they talked commonplaces, and then, after some difficulty, Nugent began,

"I am starting for India, sir, within a month, and I have a great favour to ask of you before I go."

"Go on, my boy," said the old man, heartily. "Your father was an excellent man, and I like you. Anything I can do for you I will."

This speech seemed to embarrass the young man. He shifted uneasily in his chair, essayed to begin once or twice, and began and ended with some inarticulate sound.

"Let me help you," said the old man, in a kindly voice. "I know you have made the best of the little money you came into, but that it is all gone. If you want a little you can have it of me, and pay me back when you are able."

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"Thank you very much, sir, but I am in no want of money, and yet I would like to say a few words to you on that subject."

"Bless my soul! what can the boy mean," thought the old man. "He doesn't intend proposing to lend *me* money!" He chuckled at the notion and said aloud, "Go on, boy. Say it out. What can I do for you?"

"When I come back, sir, from India three years hence I shall have six hundred a year and a year's holiday on full pay. My next year in India, I shall have seven hundred a year."

"You are a lucky lad, but you deserve your luck, for you are a good lad too."

"And—and sir, I have been thinking that as when I come back I shall be twenty-five—I have been thinking of—" he paused.

"Marrying then, boy. Out with it."

"Yes, sir," said Nugent, hastily, delighted to be relieved of the responsibility of uttering the words.

"And have you made up your mind as to the lady—but no, you are too young for that yet."

This was a terrible obstacle and Nugent felt, for a short time, in despair. At last he resolved to be bold, desperate. "I have made up my mind, sir."

"Bless my soul! Why, according to yourself you are only twenty-two. Do I know her?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who is she, boy? Don't be afraid of me. She'll be a lucky girl who gets you, I'm sure. What is her name?"

"Mary, sir."

"Mary what?"

"Your daughter Mary, sir."

"Good heavens! What put such a thought into your head, boy. I never heard of such a thing, never thought of such a thing. I don't wish to say anything that may offend you, but the thing is altogether impossible, you know. What! You marry our Mary! I can hardly believe my senses. And then take her away to India! Take her away to die in that dreadful India, thousands of miles away from her people and her friends. Good heavens! young man, you must be mad!"

For at least half-an-hour the father and suitor strove one against the other, and in the end, although the old man was in no way shaken, he determined to consult his wife. He left Nugent alone, and was absent quarter-of-an-hour. When he returned to the dining-room, he said his wife shared his opinions on the matter, and had, in addition, a rooted aversion from a long engagement. The thing was absolutely out of the question, *but* as he had told him Mary seemed well-disposed towards him, they would not say the case was without final hope. They imposed some conditions; namely, that he was not again to see, speak, or communicate with

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their daughter before leaving Ireland, and that nothing like an engagement was to be understood. If upon Nugent's return from India three years hence both the young people still found themselves of the same mind, he and Mrs. Musgrave would then consider the matter, but it was to be understood that the father and mother would then make up their minds as though nothing had been said on the subject before.

This was very far indeed from the arrangement which young Nugent desired; but the old people were inexorable, and with one slight modification they would hear of nothing else: He might write to her before going, briefly telling her that he had spoken to her father, and that nothing would be decided until his return; and he might, upon reaching Ireland once more, send her a message saying he had come back.

John Nugent, within that month left the town of Clonmore on his way to India. His heart was heavy at getting out and it seemed to him as though he was saying farewell for ever to the town he had known from his youth. He had honourably kept his engagement and never sought a meeting with Mary. But through William Musgrave, her brother, he had heard about her. William had told him not to be downhearted and that three years would not be long running over, and that as for Mary, she would be true as steel. The brother had promised to write from time to time, letting Nugent know of Mary, and this promise was a great source of consolation to John on the outward way. But the first letter he got after his arrival told him that it should also be the last, as his father and mother insisted there should be absolutely no communion, direct or indirect, between the young people.

At first a few of John's old Clonmore friends wrote him letters in which he heard occasionally of the Musgraves. But before the first year was over these letters had wholly ceased, and for two whole years John Nugent was left in absolute ignorance of anything that might be going on in Clonmore.

At last the day of leave arrived, and he set out upon his homeward way. When he got to Dublin he telegraphed to Clonmore. "I shall arrive by the mail, and call in the morning."

The mail got into Clonmare at ten in the night. It was then too late to think of visiting the Musgraves.

The night was damp and raw and chill, with a slight depressing fog. The railway station did not come near the town of Clonmore, but stood on the Fairy Hill road about half a mile farther from the town than Fairy Hill.

John Nugent felt depressed and miserable. The cold entered at every pore and chilled his spirits. He felt wretched. It was such a night as would depress the most sanguine. It was impossible to see ten yards ahead with any clearness. Everything was damp and drooping.

Having given his luggage to the omnibus from the hotel and

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said he would walk, he left the dismal, deserted platform, and took to the dismal, deserted road.

Nothwithstanding the darkness and fog, he vaguely recognised every landmark as he went. His thoughts were a burden and a curse to him. Although he had no doubt of Mary's constancy when he thought of it as such, he could not help, over and over, saying to himself that it was unlikely the loveliest girl in Clonmore would be for three years without suitors, and that she could resist them all.

He knew her father and mother were in no way eager for the match. They would do little to help him, and might do much to hurt.

What a lonely, miserable walk this was. What a climate. The heat of India was almost better than this. Suppose when he got to the hotel, someone there recognised him, should tell him she was married! Married! What a hideous thought. Could it be he had come thousands of miles to this small town, and at the end of his journey should find that journey had been taken in vain and was to end in despair!

He knew every foot of the way. That was the gate to Kelly's house there, on his left, that to Ryan's on his right, and then a little further on, on his left, he would find the gravel sweep that let to Fairy Hill gate.

Fairy Hill! What memories were there connected in his mind with that place! The last time he had met her they had gone up that gravel sweep together in the dark. They had spoken to that echo, and the echo had answered back; and he had played a trick with her name; a heedless, boyish trick unbecoming the present dignity of his love. And yet, although it was a heedless, boyish trick, how sweet that hour had been! How sweet to hear the echo giving back her name coupled with his! Was that echo ever destined to give back these names again. Here was the sweep. He now hated the notion of getting to the hotel; for how could he know but when they recognised him, he would be received with agonising compassion or maddening jeers.

It was better for him not to get to the hotel until late. The streets would not yet be deserted. He might be recognised in the light of a lamp by someone, and thus become acquainted with his fate before he was fully prepared to encounter it. On this lonely, dark road there were no lamps. The longer he tarried here, the less likelihood of discovery.

Though that echo might be destined never to give back again the words he last had heard from it, in response to her voice, it would be some sort of poor consolation for him on this night of his return to hear it say even "Mary" once again.

Ay, he should go up and speak into that echo, and hear once more his Mary's name.

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Here was the gate. He knew the bolt, swung the gate open and went through. It was about two hundred yards from the entrance to the place from which the echo might be evoked. He walked along like a man in a dream. He no longer took any notice of things surrounding him. He had so often walked before from the gate to the stone post which marked the place where the echo might be heard, that he could have found his way to it asleep.

Here was the post. The mist had thickened. He knew the post was not close to any large object. The Hill would of course be absolutely invisible in the darkness and the fog. But the silence of the night and the mist in the air would all tend to increase the force of the echo.

He placed his hand upon the post and leaned forward. "Mary," he called.

Unbroken silence.

"Mary," he repeated, in a louder voice, trembling as he spoke.

Again the silence was unbroken. What could this mean? "Good God!" he thought, "can this be an omen? Is she dead? I cannot be mistaken. There was no other pillar of this kind near."

Once more he bent forward, and, raising his voice still louder, cried "Mary."

At last there was a sound, but not the echo of her name. It was the sound of a footstep on the gravel. He drew himself up and listened intently. He did not wish anyone should be a witness to his folly. He remained motionless a moment. The footstep continued to approach. In old times no one came here on such a night. Who could be this visitor? At last, right in front of him, he dimly saw a figure moving towards where he stood. Then it paused.

For a moment the two remained thus, and during that time he distinctly heard another, a heavier footstep coming towards him on the gravel.

All at once his heart stood still, for at last what seemed to be a faint echo of a voice came to him, "John, is that you?"

"Mary," he cried.

"William! William! it is he!"

Then the two figures drew close together and in another moment his arms were round her.

For a little while no word was spoken.

"How did you come here, love, at such a time, on such a night. I called your name into the echo and the echo did not answer."

"The echo, John, is gone for ever."

"And the real voice come in its stead."

She did not answer, except with the pressure of her hand.

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Again he heard the footsteps on the gravel. "Is there anyone with you?" he asked.

"Yes, William came with me from the house. We live there now," she said, pointing in the direction of the lost echo. "William," she called out.

A third figure approached out of the mist, saying, as it drew near, "Welcome, John, welcome. I told her she was a fool for thinking you'd come here. I do believe there is some witchcraft among people like you two. Run along in out of the cold both of you. You see, John, shortly after you left the governor bought the hill and carted it, echo and all away, and made a heap of money out of the gravel and sand, and built a house on the place where the old hill stood. Come on, the governor said he'd give her foolish notion a chance, and sit up."

"What! Do you mean to say he will receive me as well?"

"Ay, boy. You needn't pretend I told you, but often when he looked at this child here, he said he was sorry he had made so hard a bargain with you."

"Never mind about the past," said Nugent, now full of unspeakable delight. "It is only a shadow, and can do no harm. If what you say about your father is true, the future is going to be full of the voice I care for best, and all the past is no more to me than The Lost Echo."

RICHARD DOWLING.

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SILVERMEAD.

Chapter XIV.

Horace's almost certain suspicion that Cyril Acton was either now at Silvermead House, or lurking in the neighbourhood, was destined to receive immediate confirmation. Not two hundred yards from where the horse was tied, he saw something shining in the grass. This proved to be a silver shield upon a russia leather cigar case, and on it was clearly engraved in bold characters, the monogram of C. and A. He flung it down where he had found it and hurried on.

The south front of Silvermead House, which Horace was now nearing, with its aspect and approaches, has been sufficiently described in a former chapter. Its outdoor winding stair, leading to Miss Harding's apartments, her own private garden, and the adjacent grove, are still familiar to the reader. It took our hero nearly half an hour, after finding the cigar case, to reach the sheltered post of observation, whence he had but a few nights previously watched the fair spirit of the place disport herself in the moonbeams. The distance he might have rushed over, indeed, in a third of the time, but his main object was to run the smallest possible risk—on this day-like night—of being seen, for how was he to draw any safe inference from the drama on which he felt, and with ample cause, that his whole fate depended, if he rashly warned the actors thereof that they were watched?

He had advanced, then, like a thief in the night, making long circuits to hug the favouring shade of trees or hillock—as Beatrice, playing the lapwing close to the ground—and conducting himself generally like a young conspirator against conspirators. And at last he stood there in the same familiar spot, having seen on his way no farther sign of any sort, and heard no unaccustomed sound, save, for a while, the occasional and ever-familiar neighing of the fastened steed, which at last either ceased or became lost in distance.

Yes, little more than a week ago, he had stood there, love-sick, indeed, as man might be, but utterly free from all other anxiety; and even doting on his sweet pain. Now, the most mortal anxiety overwhelmed him, and he was a prey to the blackest forebodings. That the inexplicable proceedings of the night should prove compatible with immunity to his beloved—for she was emphatically,

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and, spite of all, still his beloved—that they should foreshadow no attaint to her safety, honour, and peace, appeared to him each moment more and more impossible to hope for. Alas! his sanguine mood had vanished now, though Horace could by no means tell why.

Must it be owned? Ah, alack for all human faith and confidence! As minutes passed by and brought no sign, Horace began to fear that Camilla was a willing party to the plot, whatever it might be, and a hideous feeling began to grow in his breast—a feeling that made him hate himself even more than her—that her love for him was all a sham, and that Cyril Acton was now, and had ever been, the real object of her affections.

Suddenly the great tower clock began to toll forth into the mystic silence, the witching hour of twelve.

Exactly as its last stroke ceased to vibrate, the glass doors on the terrace slowly opened, and Camilla, clad in some loose robe of dark material, cautiously came forth. First she crept to the balustrade and leaned over, looking about in every direction. Then she stepped back and closed the doors upon the room, wherein no light appeared. This done, she proceeded—still very slowly, and with the utmost caution—toward the moss-grown stairway, and began to descend its winding steps. There could be no sort of doubt of her identity from where Horace stood. Had he first seen her thus, and at that distance, it might have been difficult indeed to swear positively to her on meeting her elsewhere; but, knowing her as he did, with all a lover's thoroughness of stored-up observation, he *knew*—and loathed the knowledge, that if ever certainty was certainty—Camilla Harding was responsible for every act of the rash girl before him, for it was her very, very self. And he was right. It *was* no other but her own, own self.

She continued, with a deliberation which alone sufficed to prove to her hapless lover that her conscience upbraided her for the hidden deed she was about, to descend the stairs, at every slip looking up and down and all about her. Once, when a huge white owl swooped across the garden, with its peculiar cry, Camilla, startled, retraced her downward course, as though she would regain her room; but, a moment later, and after standing with one hand to her heart for a brief space, she resumed her descent. At last she has come to within three steps of the ground, and there stops with the air of one who says, "I'll go no farther, come what may."

This was apparently the preconcerted signal, or at all events Horace felt it so to be. The unfortunate boy's heart now beat to that degree, and his temples throbbed so, that he believed in another moment something must break, give way, or burst, and he must die. To be sure, he little knew what man can bear and live! The sound in his head can be likened only to the beating of a drum.

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Camilla had now stood motionless for quite a minute.

It seemed ten to Horace.

Suddenly, from out a clump of evergreens to the right, and still protected by their deep shade to within three paces from where she stood, the form of a young man rapidly emerged, and lightly bounding with the elasticity of youth and love to where Camilla stood—with eager out-stretched arms—he clasped her passionately to his breast.

Chapter XV.

No sooner had Horace Brudenell, struck to the heart by what he saw, realised that his presence at Silvermead was certainly not required than he proceeded to beat a retreat with far more speed if still with almost as much pains to escape observation as he had displayed in his approach: for he felt sure that Cyril Acton's companion, whoever he might be, and the countrymen had stoutly maintained that the conspirators were two, still kept watch in the neighbourhood, whilst his friend was happy in the arms of that Camilla Harding, whom, a moment before, Horace had not ceased to worship, even if he had begun to doubt her, and whose name must now for ever be synonymous in his mind with everything that is base, false and contemptible. His journey home, however, was marked by no encounter or incident of any sort.

The chestnut with white stockings indeed gave vent to a new series of neighings as that intelligent and solitude-hating animal recognised a human tread not far off; and the equine challenge seemed a kind of mockery to the wanderer, as though the fates were taking speech in that dumb brute to deride him for his loss. Loss! Was it indeed a loss?

When we discover in time that we have been utterly deceived by and in the person to whom we should have rashly committed our happiness for life ought we not rather to exult than grieve? Ought not our feeling to be one more of blessed deliverance than of regret or repining?

Horace asked himself all this in countless forms as he retraced his way, but always arrived at the same unconsoling conclusion.

"Since," he told himself, "she was worthless, better a thousand times that I should have found her out. Hence I rejoice infinitely in having obeyed the impulse which took me to Silvermead to-night. But am I any the less wretched on that account? I am not now mourning her as she is, but as I believed her to be. It was a delusion, but what of that? Why, to my misfortune, has my goddess proved of clay? Why, in a word, was it not ordained that this girl should turn out all I so fondly thought her, all that she so completely seemed?

"Here is my great sorrow, there the blight which has fallen upon

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my soul, and which must for ever make both love and that sweet faith in woman from which love takes its being things that shall have no part in my life. I have not changed and never should have done. I still love *what I loved* as wildly as ever—nay, more so from the sense of loss. Female honour, beauty, grace, charm, youth, all; but, for my curse, I can never care much for them now, because in her I can love them no more: and in others, they will never appear the same."

So with thoughts such as these did he pursue his weary way, thoroughly dispirited, yet hurrying ever, he knew not why, for he was in no sort of haste to reach that bed where he felt sure no sleep awaited him.

He strode rapidly along unconsciously seeking, as it is so natural for everyone to do, repose in bodily fatigue.

I suppose we are all more or less superstitious at certain times, and Horace took it now as a sure omen that his future existence was to be a sad one, that the sky had become so overcast as completely to shut out the moon which shone so brightly an hour ago to show him his dishonour, while a drizzling rain came steadily down, wetting him to the skin. On one point, however, he turned out to be quite wrong. As soon as he found himself safe back at Massing—if a man who has lost his love and got back his heart can be called safe—he poured himself out a good stiff glass of brandy and water, which the thoughtful old butler had left ready to his hand, gave himself such another fierce rub down as he had done after the little episode of the lake, and, tumbling into bed thoroughly exhausted, fell at once into one of those glorious unbroken sleeps which, alas, are almost the monopoly of great youth, and never awoke until the somewhat late entrance—it was Sunday—of the servant on the following morning with the customary "Nine o'clock, sir," that being about three hours later than the working day rising time.

At Horace's age all the great experiences of life as they occur are accompanied by surprises. As he performed his toilet to-day—wonderfully refreshed and invigorated as he was, almost in spite of himself by his prolonged sleep—he could not help wondering that while his spirit deplored the lost Camilla beyond all expression, his body should keep so sound and well under the blow. No pain in his head, no ache in his heart! Had he been asked yesterday what would be the physical consequence of such a bereavement as had now befallen him, he would have answered with the utmost promptness and conviction, "Total wreck!"

And now the thunderstorm had actually fallen, and there was nothing of the kind; but, on the contrary, he beheld in the glass an absolutely rosy young man tying his cravat just as usual. The apparition, joined to the fact of his feeling so well in body, caused him no little disgust, and—yes, there could be no doubt of it—oh, horror! he was positively hungry.

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Had he then, he asked himself, been always deceived as to the manner of fellow he really was? Does he lack feeling, sensibility, real heart? Is he woven of coarser and duller material than he has been wont to suppose?

He goes down to breakfast nearly as much disgusted with himself as grieved at his midnight adventure.

No sooner, however, does he behold Lady Susan, seated there with the rest of the party, than a tremendous reaction takes place.

There, then, is the woman he is now to love and cherish for ever! Why not? Her or another, it matters not which—they are all alike now. Why should he not oblige his uncle, and do what everybody says is the right thing? He is not going to turn monk, then why not marry?

And at the thought, and even as he is shaking her ladyship's hand, a sudden and dreadful tightness comes about his heart as though some enemy held it in his hand and was cruelly crushing it, and Horace tells himself, not without pride, "I am a man, then, after all."

Yes, he preferred immeasurably to perform his allotted task in pain and anguish to going through with it in a numbed and callous torpor; so true it is that in our sorest griefs and troubles self-love is never killed within us.

After church had been duly attended, Sir Howard summoned his nephew to the library, and, having carefully shut the door, delivered himself as follows:

"Horace, our guests, the Cauldfields, leave us to-morrow and, as you are aware, proceed to town in a very few days. When lately I laid before you my views concerning a possible marriage between you and the daughter of my old friend and neighbour, you pleaded surprise, and asked for time to consult your feelings and think the matter over."

"Yes, uncle, and I assure you I have done so very carefully."

"Well, nephew, I suppose you can only have arrived at one result."

Although Sir Howard said this with much show of confidence, a careful observer could not fail to detect a certain amount of doubt and anxiety both in his manner and tone.

These were destined, however, to be speedily set at rest.

"Yes, uncle. If you still think that Lady Susan and her parents hold me worthy of so great an honour, I have quite made up my mind to propose to her."

This was explicit at any rate. No opposition on Horace's part need any further be feared. Yet, now a new discontent arose in the Baronet's mind. Horace spoke like a dutiful nephew certainly, but yet not the least as a lover.

Lady Susan was exactly the sort of statuesque woman whom Sir Howard himself admired, and this utter indifference to her charms in his young kinsman at once bred suspicion and uneasi-

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ness in the uncle's mind. He did not know what to say next, and there was an awkward pause, Horace half suspecting the truth.

At last Sir Howard asked:

"Do you not greatly admire Lady Susan?"

"I do, indeed; she is undeniably handsome."

"I am sure you ought to consider yourself a most fortunate young man."

"And so I do, uncle. Have you any doubt on the subject?"

"No, no—only neither at this moment, nor in what I have noticed when you were together, do I detect that—that *empressement*—those, in short—those symptoms which denote the lover."

"I should think not indeed," said Horace to himself. Then aloud—

"Uncle, in the first place we are not a demonstrative family, and then, to be quite frank with you, I doubt if I shall ever be" —he nearly said "*again*"—"what is called 'in love!' But surely that condition is hardly necessary to constitute a happy marriage. If I do not yet exactly love Lady Susan, remember how very little I have seen of her, and take into consideration one great point in my favour—I certainly love no one else."

This was balm to Sir Howard. The announcement not only delighted, it surprised him. There is the great satisfaction of dealing with those we know by experience to be utterly truthful.

Had Horace loved elsewhere, Sir Howard would not have held him bound to confess it, but he knew for certain that if such were the case, he would never have uttered the above denial. It made him quite genial.

"Well, well," he said, "with respect, admiration and sympathy, you will get on just as well, probably better than if you were wildly in love. Those solid qualities are all the more lasting when they form the very basis of an alliance."

"I feel sure of it."

"Many of the happiest unions I have ever known were between people who have never, I should say, been what is conventionally called 'in love.'"

"I daresay."

"Oh, there can't be a doubt upon the subject. And now, as to the *modus operandi* and the—the sinews of war. Your principal expense you will find will be your stables;" and he went on to deal with that subject in great detail; then spoke of the sort of rooms Horace was to occupy in London; the figure he was to make, and so forth, with a minuteness which would be wearisome to repeat. The upshot of it all was, that Horace was to have five hundred pounds in money, and Sir Howard undertook to pay all bills for him of every description, an old fashioned plan to which the Baronet had in his youth been accustomed and which was supposed to exercise a great hold and generally beneficial

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influence upon the young and inexperienced, when first launched upon the sea of fashionable life.

Needless to say that Horace agreed with positive apathy to everything that was laid before him, and would have accepted five shillings with the same composure as he did the above very liberal sum, and then uttered the same quiet: "Thank you, uncle."

Nothing of any import occurred at Massing between the above interview and young Brudenell's departure for town a few days later, where the good and constant Lady Susan Graye awaited him with properly tempered impatience.

Chapter XVI.

Very different was the anxiety with which Camilla Harding looked forward to the promised visit of her Horace on the day which followed the above interview between uncle and nephew. She longed for it with a feverish joy which prevented her sitting still or settling down to any sort of occupation for three consecutive minutes, from the time she rose from breakfast. And what wonder? The first meeting between lovers after that at which proposal and acceptance take place, is always an event expected by both, not only with impatience, but trepidation. How changed are the terms on which they now find themselves from those which have been maintained throughout all previous encounters! Why, they feel themselves in a sense already married. All uncertainty—the ruling element at each former meeting has for ever disappeared. All the old questions are decided and forgotten, and a legion of new ones have now to be discussed. She wonders what difference these altered circumstances have wrought in him, and he likewise wonders much about her. Both are most terribly anxious not to disappoint the other in these their new and untried characters. Suspense, under such *data*, grows too thrilling not to be painful, and so Lilla found it that day. Twice she changed her whole toilet; and thrice her style of coiffure. Not that she thought it much mattered now, but she found that to be constantly preparing for her lover as, poor thing, she still called him, was the only way to get through the time bearably. Talking to her gran'ma, in whose mind the impending encounter was also, of course, uppermost, the girl found too irritating for her present mood. She had recourse to the piano more than once, but albeit usually a respectable performer—in great measure it must be owned, from the daily half-hour of scales so rigorously enforced by Lady Prendergast, and without which there can be no serious playing—she found that for once she could not execute even the simplest of her pieces, that the old lady at last obliged her to close the instrument.

But, if waiting for three o'clock to come was an excitement

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more painful than pleasurable, what shall be said of the change for the worse as that hour, then the quarter, then the half hour struck, and no Horace appeared?

It seems like a work of supererogation to explain the events of that eventful night more clearly than has already been done, and to say, in so many words, why sweet Lilla's conscience, as regarded Horace, was light and at rest.

No one will of course have doubted her for a moment, nor failed to recognise in the seeming Romeo her erratic, erring, but still affectionate, and in face and above all, in figure, admirably preserved father. Neither were you ever puzzled by Cyril Acton's connection with the affair, and without such a guide and go-between, that nocturnal conspiracy of a man and his daughter—separated for more than a whole year—to meet for a few brief minutes, could certainly not have been successfully carried out, in a country and on premises quite unknown to the chief actor in the scene. Acton had simply ridden over to a certain signpost, as arranged between them by correspondence; had there met Cave Harding who had walked by the side of the chestnut hack, as far as the spot where Horace found the animal tied to a railing. Thence the friends had walked together to within a stone's throw of Camilla's windows. As has been seen, Cave advanced alone to his child immediately on the stroke of twelve, while Acton, whom Camilla never even saw on that night, kept watch around, being equally on the alert for any movement from within the house, nay more so, than out of it. Thanks, however, for Horace's caution and previous acquaintance with the ground, he escaped Cyril's vigilance.

But, brief as the meeting of father and daughter had been, the latter had yet found time to acquaint him with her engagement, and to tell him how utterly she had given her heart away, to one who—she thought, she was sure, loved her very dearly; and all without having been able to wait to ask her dear papa's consent and approval. Blessing she did not talk about. Not that she was in the least conscious of the omission, but there was an incongruity between Cave Harding and blessings which no human being, who knew him ever so little, would dream of breaking through. Like Lady Prendergast, on being told there was a love affair in the wind, Mr. Harding had expected another name—that of Cyril Acton—to be breathed in his ear, and, like her, he had blurted out his surprise that it was not so. However there is as much tone, as regards expression, in whispers as in ordinary speaking, and that in which Lilla said,

"Oh dear no, papa; Cyril Acton is a true and good friend of mine, but he is not a bit like Horace Brudenell," had an inflection which conveyed that no number of princes, kings or cardinals rolled into one could ever rival the, to Mr. Harding, unknown quantity of our hero's perfections. Of course when this fond parent

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heard briefly how very well the young man stood with Sir Howard, he was doubly glad to sanction the engagement. Not but what it is very doubtful whether he would have opposed it in any case. He was in the first place an easy-going, happy-go-lucky sort of man; and then, as he had never done anything but spoil Lilla, and had never said "no" to her in his life, he was hardly likely to begin now. It is really wonderful how many parents there are—and these chiefly fathers—whose whole idea of duty towards their offspring would seem to consist in being good playmates to them! Such men, it is true, often acquire one chief object of their aim, if aim they have. They get well loved. However let them know that it is not without a dash of contempt from these very children whom they have never thwarted, and who acquire a curious habit of adding two ominous words to the terms of affection in which they may speak to others of their father; and these are "poor dear."

Well, the nocturnal interview had ended by their both agreeing that it was very delightful, but very wrong and foolish, and must on no account be risked again. Acton was to contrive an occasional correspondence until such time as this model parent's "little speculations" should bear sufficient fruit to enable him and his daughter to "snap their fingers at the old cat," as Cave irreverently put it, at which remark Lilla, I am afraid, laughed.

Thus it will be seen that the ill-fated girl could have no suspicion that she had incurred her lover's displeasure, and that thought, at least, was not added to her other miseries on this dreadful Monday afternoon. Of course such an idea never entered her head; how should it? Once, indeed, she asked herself whether anything in the long letter she had written to Horace could by chance have been misunderstood and offended him, but she very sensibly scouted the idea, telling herself that if such, however improbably, were the case, Horace would at least have written, telling her he wished it unsaid or explained away before they met again.

For the hundredth time Camilla strays to one of the windows which look on the approach and, pressing her forehead against the rain-beaten pane to cool it, strains her eyes through the wet and foggy distance in vain. That the weather should stop him is a supposition which only enters her brain to be well laughed at—in so far, that is, as the poor child can laugh at anything just now.

Then a thousand fears invade her already half-widowed soul. His horse has shied at one of the flashes of lightning of which there have been several, and thrown him as he cantered carelessly along, his thoughts all of her. He rides such young and half-broken horses! Oh! if she dared, how she would fly to the stables and despatch a groom in search.

Perchance, even now, her Horace lies senseless, and far from all help, against some Kerbstone!

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Or he is ill, at home at Massing. She is willing, eager, to think almost anything of her lover but that he is neglecting her.

Ha! what is that looming through the mist and rain? At last! Yes; surely a man on horseback. It is he!

How foolish she has been to cause herself all this anguish, and to wrong her love by doubting him, all for one little hour's delay —a slight unpunctuality which might be accounted for in a hundred ways.

"See, the cavalier draws nearer, but—oh! surely that sorry steed is not Horace's, nor can that podgy figure, with all allowance for magnification by fog, or the weather and consequent wraps, be his. Horror!

It is Dr. Mc'Finn. To be sure; he was to come to-day to see Lady Prendergast. The revulsion of feeling is too much for Lilla, and she gives up all hope now, as, bursting into tears, she rushes off to her own room.

There is something particularly hateful to us in incurring the pity of those we dislike; and the grandmother's well-meant condolence, and little scraps of comfort, when Lilla and she met for dinner, were dreadfully galling to the girl. Not that she had the bad taste to allow this to appear. Whether Lilla wanted her love or not—and she was now entering on a period, did she but know it, when she could ill afford to dispense with affection of any kind—she was ever aware of the depth of Lady Prendergast's feeling of utter devotion to her; and to which she might have responded, very warmly, but for her grandmother's persistent albeit, conscientious attitude towards her father, of which a good deal has been said in the earlier portion of this history.

"Oh, that she would only leave me alone!" was her constantly repeated mute ejaculation, throughout the evening.

Still, she could not but admit to herself both the kindness of her aged relative's intentions, and the gentle and sympathetic manner in which it was carried out.

"No doubt," said the old lady, as they returned to the drawing-room, "to-morrow's post will explain the mystery."

"I cannot think it, gran'ma."

"But yes, I say, it must. Remember, that in any case, we are dealing with gentlemen—people of our own world. They are bound by the laws of that world. A man cannot break such an appointment as that of to-day, and make no sign. Believe me, were you a dispassionate looker on, you would be the first to see that such a supposition is childish.

"But, gran'ma, the *manque*, or whatever I am to call it, has already taken place. Massing is but a few miles off. They are not paupers. They have grooms and horses. Within an hour of Mr. Brudenell's failure to make his appearance, according to your very pleasant theory of everybody being bound by

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the code of good manners, some explanation should have reached us."

"Very plausible, my love, I admit; but, mark what I say, to-morrow's post will bring news."

Lilla breathed to herself a fervent "God grant it!" then aloud—

"Gran'ma, I have always had—all my life"—and the girl spoke solemnly of that vast space of time, with the comic gravity usual to the young, "very strong presentiments. I tell you something very bad, that we do not know of, has happened."

And it was a proof how terribly unhinged both in body and mind our poor little Camilla was that night, that she hereupon nestled up close to the old lady and wept upon her bosom quite contentedly, even forgetting in her utter prostration all her ancient grudges against her; remembering only—for there was a fund of generosity in Lilla, after all, and the really generous are always grateful—that Lady Prendergast was doing the best she could for her now.

Perhaps, for the intricacies of human nature will admit of the supposition, it was easier for the girl to melt towards her grandmother from the fact that she had so triumphantly carried out under her roof that awful clandestine meeting with her proscribed father, only two nights before.

Anyhow, it befel that out of Lilla's new trouble was inaugurated that Monday night a more harmonius footing than had ever before been maintained between these two wilful ones, and that the elder did not fail in her prayers—which were ever long and old fashioned—to thank heaven that what she deemed the first earthworks of the fortress of her grand-daughter's heart were at last carried, after an unprecedently long and persistent siege. Lilla, too, prayed, but her orisons were not those of thanksgiving. Rather did she assail heaven with entreaties which were almost like commands.

"Grant me him, grant me him," she gasped, "or if not take my life, for if Thou dost not, I doubt, but *I* will end it!"

But the poor maiden that night was not in her wonted devout mind.

Chapter XVII.

Tuesday morning broke sombre and rainy like the day before. As Lady Prendergast had foretold, the post-bag did contain a letter from Massing, but it was not from the right person, being merely a line from Sir Howard, saying that he should be passing the Silvermead lodge gates on his way to a political meeting at the other side of the county, and would make bold to stop and ask for luncheon on his way.

The *entente cordiale*, which had begun the day previous between

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the old and young ladies, was somewhat strengthened by this very common-place epistle, for they turned and twisted the baronet's visit into every imaginable shape and meaning, as they chatted away the morning together, in quite harmonious confidence. Women beat men all to nothing in utterly forgetting their little differences, when it suits them.

Camilla's face began to resume much of its wonted brightness as the luncheon hour drew near. No doubt Sir Howard's announced descent upon them, albeit that he said he should be passing, was susceptible of a very favourable interpretation indeed. What more natural than that, on Horace telling him of the course he had taken, his uncle should have given a qualified consent, stipulating that no further step be taken until he had himself seen Lady Prendergast, and made his own conditions; and in such a case Sir Howard would very likely have undertaken to verbally excuse Horace for not having kept his appointment of the previous day.

This was the solution in which the grandmother really believed, and she explained it to Camilla in kind and sympathetic words, which a few hours later on she wished, with all her soul, that she had never spoken.

If the operation has to be attempted of cutting a young man out of a girl's heart, it should be done quickly, neatly, and at one time.

Fate is never so cruel as when she deludes with bright gleams of hope, which, vanishing a moment afterwards, leaves our sky more pitchy dark than before.

At length the waiting was over; the servant threw open the door and announced the visitor.

Camilla had obtained that the blinds should be a good half-way down, and she rose to receive Sir Howard with what bravery she could muster, and I have said she was no coward. Not but what all great lovers must in a sense turn cowards when there is question of losing their beloved.

There was so much in Sir Howard Brudenell that was invariable, that it was hard to read either his mood or errand in his manner or appearance.

Always courteous, reposeful, dignified and self-possessed, circumstance had little scope for telling tales about him; yet he had not been five seconds in that darkened room ere the keen eyes and keener perception of the young girl had read one word in his demeanour which turned her very marrow icy cold, well-nigh making her sink down where she stood, and that word was calamity.

She read at once that he had no errand. I cannot pretend to tell you how, and I am quite sure she could still less have explained it, and yet the conviction was there, almost to the exclusion of any possibility that she might be mistaken.

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The visitor, on his side, although far from the sharpest of men, was sufficiently a man of the world to see at a glance that his coming was an event for the two women, and he had but to consult for an instant poor Camilla's pale face to read aright the entire situation, so far, at least, as its main bearings were concerned. He saw that she loved Horace—for all that Miss Laffinch had told him was amply present to his mind—and that the girl awaited, as though it were a fiat of life or death, the words that should fall from his lips. His first feeling was one of hearty regret at having come.

Unless we are naturally cruel by preference, which I trust few of us are, it is terribly painful to find ourselves in any such position. To feel that we are regarded as a small providence, and then have to blight instead of bless.

Sir Howard's visit was probably not so completely a matter of chance as he would have it appear. True, he owed Lady Prendergast a visit and was not at all loth to break a dreary drive of over a dozen miles through a soaking country by stopping at Silvermead for a snack and a chat. But, as we have seen, the tales he had been told about his nephew and this young girl had exercised his spirit in no common degree, and now that Horace had acceded to all his wishes, never even hinting at any attachment for Camilla, and had gone off to London for the express purpose of pushing his suit with Lady Susan, there was no doubt some feeling of curiosity at work in the uncle which prompted him to come and judge for himself of the state of affairs.

As for the old lady—time had somewhat dulled her mortal vision, and, to a less extent, her general perceptions. She was, therefore, at the moment the least disturbed of the three. It was in her most ordinary manner and tone that she said, after hands had been shaken:

"This is a kindly thought of yours, Sir Howard, to take pity upon two lone women. Come and sit down near the fire."

"I assure you, Lady Prendergast, the gain is mine. Besides, I am a lone man now."

"Indeed!"

"Yes; my nephew has gone off to his first London season."

"Already!" said the dowager, surprised.

"Yes; he went yesterday. Well, there is a good deal for him to do, one way and another."

"Of course it is the right thing for young men to see the world."

"Oh, not merely that. There are a crowd of things great and small. I have just put him into the yeomanry, and there is his uniform to get. Then Lord Cauldfield is to present him—a horse or two to buy—and——"

"Then we shall see him no more for the present?" put in Camilla, who had not yet spoken.

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"Why, no; not unless you are going up to adorn some of the London balls, Miss Harding; he will be at them all, I promise you."

"O, I am not going up, but if I did," she added, with a proud smile and a secret effort, "I do not know that I should dance with Mr. Brudenell."

"Indeed! Is he so bad a performer?"

"O dear no, a very good waltzer, but——"

"Why then?"

"Well, Sir Howard, he—he asked particularly if I—if we should be at home yesterday, Monday; I said we should be very happy to see him, and—he never came."

During this speech Camilla kept up an attempt at laughter and a bantering tone.

"Really!" exclaimed Sir Howard, with unfeigned surprise, "I was not aware——"

"Now was not that detestably rude for a new acquaintance?" pursued the poor child, more lightly still.

"Rudeness is not one of Horace's faults," said the baronet, half to himself, and lapsing suddenly into a brown study. "I am as puzzled as you are—hum——"

There was an awkward silence.

Presently the grandmother said:

"Perhaps in the hurry of his departure for town he had no time to call here. He will possibly write a line."

"O," said Camilla, seeing that Sir Howard was really in the dark, not pretending to be, "pray do not attach the smallest importance to so slight a thing—I—I only mentioned it—I—I can't really say why."

"O but I do, and the greatest importance. My dear Miss Harding, once make light of the laws of social intercourse, of good breeding, and where are we? A pebble will in the beginning turn a stream. Manners, my dear young lady, are one of the strongest bulwarks we have against Radicalism, Socialism, and the secret societies."

But it was not in its political aspect that the question was interesting to Camilla. Sir Howard, too, as we know, had quite other reasons for wishing to fathom this little mystery; albeit that his horror at any breach of etiquette, especially in a Brudenell, was very real indeed.

The topic continued to absorb him, and during a short conversation which followed between himself and his hostess, he was so absent that he twice had to ask her to repeat some remark. This was a small thing, the talk being only of a new gardener and some flowers that cheered the rooms, but to Camilla it was a feather which showed how the wind blew.

The anxious uncle was meanwhile asking himself why Horace had formally announced a visit to Silvermead; why, having done

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so, he failed to keep the appointment; why, failing, he had sent neither message nor note of excuse?

Sir Howard remembered now having mentioned to him that he intended lunching there to-day — and above all, why had the nephew never uttered to his kind relative one syllable of the whole affair?

The announcement of luncheon created a diversion just now, welcome to all. It has often struck me that if eating happened not to be one of the necessaries of life—if we drew, for instance, our only nourishment from one brief daily draught from some essential fountain, how different, and to most people how tiresome life would be. The thing would have its advantages, no doubt. There would be no gluttony, no drunkenness, and, above all, no cooks to drive us mad by their conduct or incapacity—by their involuntary attempts to poison us. But, on the other hand, how should we get on without those utterances which are made directly or indirectly under the beneficent influence of food? At meals it is our glorious privilege to talk, whether we have anything to say or not; and, this being granted, we certainly drift into conversation as useful and pregnant of result—nay more so—than if they had been begun with a sense of responsibility, and some definite object in view.

The mid-day repast at Silvermead on this special occasion can hardly be considered in a pleasant or convivial light, but its discussion was better than sitting in the drawing-room. Whatever slight disturbances may be going on in Sir Howard's mind, they do not seem to spoil his appetite, although he notices that neither of the ladies eat with any zest, and he is sorry for them, and still more so in that he is afraid he knows the cause. There is not much to be done under the circumstances, but that little he does. He contrives to be bright without being jocular. He tells them all the news out of the morning papers he has skimmed as he drove along, and which he rightly guesses that for once, at least, these two lonely ones have not yet cared to read. This brings them to politics, the increasing troubles in Ireland, the much talked of new rules of procedure, the dreaded *clôture*.

"And when, Sir Howard, do you hope to oppose with your valuable voice this insane tide of so-called reform?" asked Lady Prendergast.

"The moment I can get a constituency sensible enough to return me," said the ex-M.P., with a smile.

"The Cauldfields are already in town, I believe?"

"O, by-the-bye," broke in Camilla, "we heard by chance yesterday—it was the gardener told my maid—that Lady Cauldfield had been nearly drowned at Massing. How was it? And had she quite recovered when she left you?"

Sir Howard could not help colouring up at the Cauldfield name. He wondered whether Camilla regarded the noble Susan as her

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rival, and if so, whether this interest in the Marchioness was really a bid for information.

"Nearly drowned! O dear no," he replied, and proceeded to give a very toned down version of the whole affair; suppressing Horace's share in the little episode altogether. Camilla, who had looked to this visit from her lover's uncle as on the proverbial straw to drowners, began to feel that he was going away, out of their house, and soon perhaps out of the county, without leaving her so much as one word of comfort, or of hope; nay more, she saw in his reticence—or was it his ignorance?—the confirmation of her worst fears. She now began quite to dread his leave-taking, and to plot and plan any little subterfuge which might detain him even for a few moments longer. With a contradiction or rather an inconsistency so often met with in the unhappy, Camilla had recourse to these expedients, although she did not in the least believe there was any good to be obtained from them. Perhaps she wanted merely to gain time to reflect whether there was anything to be done with Sir Howard which she would regret having left undone when he was no longer within reach. She had even the wildest ideas as the moment of his departure approached.

She thought of asking to be alone with him, with this formal man who was really antipathetic to her, or if she liked him at all, only with a kind of reflected liking, because he was Horace's uncle—of telling him everything, bursting into tears—not designedly, but she knew that would happen in spite of her—throwing herself upon such heart as he might chance to possess, and imploring him to do what in him lay to save her from losing her all—his nephew. For had she not her rights?

After what young Brudenell had said to her, he was bound to marry her if she chose, and what if she did choose, in spite of his inconstancy?

Extraordinary as such a course may seem, I really believe that Camilla would have taken it but for two reasons. First, she felt sure that in whatever frame of mind Horace might now be, such a procedure would make him very angry indeed, perhaps to the point of never forgiving her; and secondly, she had always that other, that last resort at command, of herself writing to her faithless one.

And so it happened that about half-an-hour after they quitted the dining-room, and when the conservatory had been duly inspected and the usual little common places of leave-taking all spoken by these three goodly personages, Sir Howard's well-appointed brougham and pair came round, and bore him away externally serene; but, all the same, with a strong suspicion on his mind that he was leaving two quite sorrowing hearts behind him, a circumstance at which he was the more pained because he saw no cure for their suffering, save in events which would utterly

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defeat his own ambition and all his long-cherished desires. Sir Howard was not a man—good churchman though he was—to love his neighbours better than himself, and as to that, why should any of us care, in this respect, to go beyond the Gospel, when so few, so very few, ever think of coming up to its precept?

(To be continued.)

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SKETCHES OF RECENT TRAVEL.

FROM AMALFI TO RAVELLO.

By O. S. T. DRAKE.

From Salerno, with its half-forgotten fame of school learning and medieval lore, a wide and beautiful road, tunnelled through wild and precipitous cliffs, and overlooking the blue waters of the Tyrrhenian Sea—conducts the traveller through scenes of indescribable beauty to the tiny town, once the bold republic of Amalfi and indeed the rival of Venice in the Levantine trade; owning many ships, which carried crusaders for a consideration to the Holy East, and returned craftily laden with silks, and spicery, and perfumes, which they afterwards disposed of to much advantage. Amalfi, wearing now but the ragged remnants of her former splendour, nestles modestly among her lemon groves, and carries on a small bustle of industry in the matter of paper and soap making and endless coils of macaroni. The lofty and rugged cliffs which overhang the little town, bristle with ruined towers of Saracenic date. The odorous fragrance of orange gardens—mingled with the scented thickets of cystisus and tamarisk and aromatic shrubs, which clothe the craggy steeps, upon which cling cactus and aloe with precarious foothold, and the straggling stems of the prickly pear—give a singularly foreign aspect to the scene. The single street winds up the narrow mountain gorge, cleft by the Molpa or Malfa's tumbling stream, which in old time gave its name to the city. Paper mills in various stages of ruinous decay encumber the valley, crossed most picturesquely by repeated spans of broken arch or bridge, mantled with the feathery fronds of the beautiful *Capilla Veneris*. The Cathedral rises grandly above the stir of the little market-place, on an imposing range of granite steps. The priceless marble shafts built into the wall at intervals are severely and relentlessly white-washed; splintered columns of the same antique marble, lie broken and neglected outside the exquisite cloister of the church, in the careless affluence of a city which could have such treasures for the taking. But whitewash fully realises the modern Italian taste. Around the quaint fountain of St. Andrew sit the market folk; piles of melons, tomatoes, and gourds lie heaped around them; fruits glowing with the rich hues of southern suns; pomegranates, prickly pears, green figs, and lavish clusters of purple grapes invest the scene with a Titianesque

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splendour of colour, which reveals the true secret of Italian art. If we climb up the lofty terrace of the Cathedral, a view of exquisite loveliness greets the eye. Below us are the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea; beyond, the ranges of tumbled Apennine rose-coloured in the morning light, or palest opal as the day steals on, or amethystine in the evening shadows, but always touched with a prevailing charm of indescribable beauty. Such is the first aspect of Amalfi; and as the stranger from a northern land clambers up her rugged stairs, or sits beneath the orange shades, or wanders along the winding road which leads him to Salerno, no step he takes but is fraught with some new interest, reveals some stray chapter of historic time, or opens to him new vistas of imagination, poetry and romance. Such as when passing beyond the brief borders of Amalfi, he reaches Atrani, and sees perched on a beetling cliff, above the tiny town, the house of Masaniello, much the same as when he left it to foment insurrection among the rude fisher folk against the hated tyranny of Spain. As he turns his back upon the shore and begins to ascend the mighty gorge by a steep and winding road, the towers of Ravello frown above him, and new memories begin to stir of Saracenic conquest and civilisation; and as he mounts still higher, a strange sight meets his eyes: a fortress city, once strong and populous, now desolate, ruined and abandoned—a mere shell of its former grandeur. The large deserted palaces once tenanted by knightly names, famous in the Duchy of Naples, are bare and ruinous. The Afflitti Palace, with its beautiful marble-columned doorway resting on Byzantine lions, such as we may see at Verona, invites us to enter. Above we observe a costly moulding in white marble of fruit and flowers, and a stately coat of arms of many quarterings. The bare, uncarpeted rooms lead us to a *loggia* overlooking the enchanting loveliness of the Gulf of Salerno; an antique bust—some noseless Juno or Ceres—lies neglected in a corner; some old pictures of sacred subjects are slowly mouldering on the walls. The *scaldini* are bronze vessels of noble form that might have been the *spolia opima* of some long perished fane. Beside them sat a peasant mother with her child, and roasted chestnuts, and gazed upon us with calm surprise. The garden, with its falling pillars, decaying marble seats, and woe-begone look of neglected cultivation, completed the general air of abandonment and desolation, nowhere so striking as on Italian soil. Thence we pass into another palace owning a courtyard of Saracenic architecture, poised on antique shafts of coloured marble. The lightness, the grace, the symmetry of the Arabian arches contrasted painfully with the plaster dropping from the walls—the worn surface of the fretted work, the darkly mouldering towers, and the fallen stones lying scattered upon the ground. The Rufalo Palace presented a similar aspect. A palace once so vast that

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its 300 rooms accommodated Emperor and Pope with their following. Within its once magnificent walls Adrian IV. and Robret the Wise sojourned with medieval accompaniments of soldiers and serving men. But the fragments of marble sarcophagi, the strewn and mutilated columns of precious carving, the antique mask in marble of a satyr leering over the village fountain, recalled the memory of an elder day, when Magna Grecia was powerful and populous, before Hun and Vandal had come to ravage the smiling and sunlit coasts.

The Cathedral of Ravello, dating from the eleventh century, possesses its share of spoil in an exquisitely-wrought mosaic pulpit, patterned with grapes and corn and parrots and peacocks. It stands upon eight pillars, based on eight lions of wondrous workmanship, and stiff Byzantine style. Facing this is a fine *ambone* of mosaic later in date, representing the prophet Jonah swallowed on one side by a huge dragon, and disgorged upon the other. The rest of the church is frightfully gilt and modernised, and bespattered with whitewash.

The scant population live amongst the ruins, and huddle in the vast deserted rooms of desolate grandeur. There are fragments beside of thirteen churches and divers monasteries, and the stately ruin of many palaces. The past of Italy vividly returns amid these scenes of utter desolation and decaying splendour. Centuries of misrule, spasms of freedom; a people strong, energetic, cruel, yet easily enslaved, as the varied chapters of their history bear witness. It is thus, revolving many thoughts, that we descend the steep and rocky and manifold steps which bring us abruptly through the leafy shade of spreading chestnuts—vocal with the babble of tiny streams, to the gloomy and silent ravine, past the tumbling torrents and the dark masses of rifted rock—to the orange groves, the aloes, and the hedges of prickly pear. The powdery snow lies lightly on the distant mountain range, though the oaks are still green, and the burnished leaves of the carob trees and the olives' smoky hue defeat all appearance of wintry gloom. The enormous crags, which tower above us, are pierced with dark and shadowy caves "and antres vast," which impress one with a sort of imposing grandeur and calm, until the ravine is fairly quitted and the traveller's steps once more regain the busy streets and circling hum of tiny Amalfi, hard at work at macaroni making. The narrow streets are crowded with picturesque groups of sailors in white drawers and tawny caps, and peasant folk barelegged, their feet clouted with rags, and bearing heavy burdens upon their heads. Priests, sufficiently dirty and unshaven, mingle with the motley figures in their beaver hats and threadbare cassocks. Within the tumbledown houses, the whirr of the macaroni making is heard as the half-clad workers jump up and down on the heavy levers with which the simple and primitive manufactory is carried on. The busy stir and idle bustle of the ever-shifting groups come back to the

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memory like a theatre's changing scenes. All is picturesque, even the ragged urchins whose trousers are held together by being sewn round pieces of string; but the miserable interiors convey a widely different impression. Without chimneys for the most part, the smoke issuing from any and every crevice, without windows, rude wooden shutters keeping out the wind and rain, mud floors, scant plenishing, rags which scarce cover the sunburnt limbs of women and children—such are the dwellings of a race which has been civilised (!) for quite 2,000 years. The ignorance, the penury, the wild looks of the women, sybilline with their unkempt locks and fiery eyes, the ill-fed and worse clad children, unite to form the reverse of the medal. The radiant light, the smiling skies, reveal only the more plainly the misery of these inhabitants of the sunlit south.

The temples which dot the shore are ruined, but the cult of the *Dii minores* still goes on, travestied beneath the names of Christian saints. The weather, the crops, the fishery, the vintage, are still entrusted to their care. To their anger or pleasure seasons and harvests good or bad are attributed; unless propitiated by lights and offerings they are held to exercise maleficent influence, and to neglect, without constant reminder, the interests of the land.

The churches are crowded by men and women chiefly of the poorest class—the well dressed and educated are rarely to be seen. With clustering locks and gleaming eyes, and rags indescribable, they throng the aisles and regard the stately ceremonial which goes on before them with the dumb and interested gaze of cattle. Few or none of that generation can read or write. Such instruction as they attain to is given orally. Much of it consists of idle and legendary lore, tales of images, miraculous and winking Madonnas; saints propitious and adverse, relics and bones and such like: but of the weightier matters of the law, truth, self-respect, humanity, upright dealing, of these there are few indications. To be ignorant is to believe helplessly, and to be poor is to be at the mercy of tax gatherer and priest; to be educated means averseness to *all* religious teaching, and the leading a life of moderate, epicurean enjoyment centred in self, and satisfied to leave things as they are.

Not far from Amalfi, on the road to Salerno, is an ancient monastery or Badia, partly hewn out of the cliff and partly consisting of an enormous cave. The monks are gone; the place is tenanted only by a few *contadini*. A tiny chapel, shaped in the living rock, is garnished with a gridiron and a few cooking vessels hanging on the wall; the light and beautiful Moorish arch, which divides the little aisle, is supported on a column of *verde antique* with a Corinthian acanthus chapter, no doubt the spoil of some heathen temple of old.

Above is a cell or chapel in the rock, painted in early Byzantine style, terribly injured, it is needless to say, by the flare of smoky

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torches and tapers. On either side of the chapel is a cavern, heaped with bones of ancient interments. Below all this, the cliff has been pierced with many chambers, connected with the Badia by a long subterranean passage. Each of these chambers was once carefully decorated with fresco. One may still make out a Virgin in prayer, with the arms extended in supplication; on one side of her a Christ in white robes, on the other, St. Theodoros. Another chamber has a Christ in Benediction, with an archangel standing beside Him. All the three heads have been destroyed for the sake of abstracting the gilt *nimbi*. The colouring is powerful and strong; it may possibly have been retouched at a later date. Skulls and bones lie carelessly heaped in every corner: the air was warm and stifling; the flickering lights we carried fell on these sad remnants of mortality and filled the mind with sombre reverie. The pigs and sheep of the peasants tenanted the caves and the recesses of the Badia. The paintings date probably to the ninth century, though some antiquarians incline to an earlier period. A fragment of Latin inscription was the only writing observable. The bodies mouldering away amid the dim recesses of the cliffs may possibly belong to very early Christian days. The mingling of their reverend dust with the squalor of South Italian peasant life, the desecrated chapels, the irreverent neglect of the past and of the dead, is a condition of things which could only exist in Southern Italy, where the life of to-day is so often like a rude palimpsest, which scrawls over the ancient scribe's delicate scrolls and exquisite handwriting, with rude medieval jest and uncouth pleasantry.

Pondering these things, and watching the seagull's darting flight across the silent sea, the purple twilight of the south falls suddenly around us. The streets begin to swarm with idle folk, released from the day's toil; one of the two Franciscans left in Amalfi saunters up and lounges idly beside the little parapet; a tall priest comes by and a woman rushes forward to kiss the hem of his garment; the stately Archbishop passes, purple clad, attended by two priests, and raises his hand in benediction as he goes, while the ragged children throng around him, and clasp his knees and kiss his hands; the sailor folk cluster round the boats drawn up upon the beach; lights twinkle in the windows, and presently silence falls for a brief interval upon the little town, for the day is done and the darkness folds all in a quiet embrace. But, by earliest dawn, the clatter of tongues will begin again, and the never ending din of Southern Italy; while the ships of grain will unlade to a soft and musical chant which always accompanies this labour and mingles harmoniously with the peaceful murmur of the sea.

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A GLIMPSE AT THE METROPOLIS OF THE FISHING TRADE.

THE International Fisheries Exhibition is sure to arouse in the public mind an interest hitherto not displayed in regard to the culture and capture of fish. We have been content to receive our daily supply from the fishmonger without troubling ourselves much about the source from whence we derive the millions of tons annually consumed by our great cities alone. Occasionally when storms, such as we have recently experienced, sweep over the 140,000 square miles of that busy fish-farm, the wild North Sea, filling the columns of our dailies with stories of disaster and death, wreck and ruin, some faint but transient impression is given us of the wealth and importance of an industry in the front rank of the food supplies of this country.

The reader who would know something more of this interesting industry giving employment to many thousands, not only in the fishing trade itself, but in the particular trades and manufactures which have necessarily sprung from it, cannot do better than pay a visit to Grimsby, England's principal fishing port.

In this paper I shall endeavour to briefly describe some of the things I saw and learned during a recent visit to that port.

It is probable that the antiquity of Grimsby is as great as is claimed for it by its historians, who trace its name and origin to a Viking called Gryme who settled here in 645; but it is absolutely certain that its present greatness began in 1848. In that year the railways from Grimsby to Manchester and Boston were opened, which gave to the Grimsby fisherman markets for his fish in every important town in the heart of England; and eventually turned the little fishing port into the Metropolis of the fishing trade.

By this event the Great North Sea was turned, so to speak, into a mine of wealth for the Grimsby fisherman, richer and more productive than any mine ever struck by the pick of the Californian gold-digger. A smack-owner who possessed but one, soon found work for two, and in a little while half-a-dozen smacks. Men who had previously hawked about the streets of Grimsby the fish they had caught, depending upon the proceeds for their daily sustenance, were placed in a very few years in affluent circumstances; building themselves villas away from the dock to which they drove every morning. Many of them were men to whom a

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newspaper or a book was a Chinese puzzle, and a pen some strange curiosity. Their method of arithmetic was not quite that of a Colenso or a Barnard Smith; but, though unintelligible to the outsider, it possessed the merits of rapidity and correctness. In spite of their illiteracy, however, they had long heads, and possessed, in common with their more learned countrymen, the instinct for making money.

Like Bret Harte's argonauts of '49, most of the Grimsby fish-merchants of '48 have "slipped unnoticed through the Golden Gate;" and their places are now filled by men of a higher stamp. Getting on for a thousand smacks now sail from the port; and four thousand men and boys are continually engaged in fishing.

Although Grimsby possesses dock accommodation nearly 100 acres in extent, the fish-dock, which is being enlarged, and at present covers an area of about thirteen acres, is the only one with which I shall deal. It frequently presents more the appearance of a timber than a fish-dock from the hundreds of large wooden boxes floating on its surface; upon which shoeless urchins often gambol and frolic in the sun. These boxes, which always puzzle the uninitiated, are about seven feet by four, with a depth of two feet; and have either holes bored in their sides or the battens placed a short distance apart to allow the water to circulate freely through. In each of these chests from fifty to a hundred live cod are stored and kept in readiness for the market. They will live in this captivity for weeks without any appreciable loss of condition, during which time they get no food. By the action of the tide, however, the water in the dock is constantly renewed.

The manner of killing cod, which operation takes place every morning, seems at first sight rather cruel: but, in reality, it is the best and least painful. A box is hauled up alongside the pontoon clear of the water which rushes from the apertures and leaves the fish quite bare. The lid is removed; a man steps in among the writhing fish, and, seizing them one by one, by the head and tail, throws them on to a platform used for the purpose. As they arrive, another man grasps the fish by the back of the head with his left hand, and deals it two or three heavy blows on the nose with a club, which kills it immediately. The slaughter is continued until quite a little mountain of fish has arisen by the side of the slayer. Much fun is often caused when some fine fellow, weighing, perhaps, 50lbs, disputes the right of the fisherman to dispatch him so summarily; and easy as it may appear, it requires great experience, and a large amount of strength into the bargain, to hold down a fish of this weight just fresh from the water.

They are at once packed in fish-trucks and sent to Billingsgate and elsewhere, where they are known as live cod, and fetch very high prices. There are frequently as many as 20,000 live cod floating in these boxes at a time.

The pride and glory of Grimsby, however, is the Pontoon;

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which, between nine and twelve every morning, presents a most lively and picturesque scene, a scene in its magnitude at all events, unique, and alone worth the journey from London to witness.

It is an immense covered platform, several hundred yards long, running down one side of the dock. On it are erected all the offices of the smack-owners and fish salesmen, and it is here where the smacks discharge their finny freights. Its accommodation is far from sufficient for the increased trade of to-day, and another and larger pontoon is in course of erection in the adjoining dock. At present many Dutch smacks are frequently unable to discharge their cargoes, and are compelled to run to Hull—16 miles further up the river. When the new pontoon is completed, the amount of fish landed at Grimsby will increase considerably.

Between the hours named the entire length is covered with heaps of beautiful glittering fish, which are being sold by "Dutch" auction simultaneously; the din and noise from which operation is almost bewildering. As the reader probably knows, this mode of auction is the reverse of ours. The fish-salesman, standing on a raised eminence over the boxes and piles of fish, commences at a high figure, and gradually, but with a rapidity of speech remarkable, descends until his price is accepted by one of the knot of fish buyers assembled around him. Every variety of fish is here displayed, fresh from the well of the smack, in all their brilliancy and brightness of colour, from the aristocratic turbot to the humble herring. The stranger will have to keep a sharp look-out if he wishes to escape being butted about by the hundreds of barrels and boxes of fish which are being rapidly wheeled to and fro in every direction; but the sight is worth far more inconvenience than he is likely to experience, and the picture will, perhaps, never fade from his memory. The peculiar odour of the ocean, combined with those of fish and tar; the busy bustling activity; the shouting; the cod-killing; the queer costumes of the fishermen, with their healthy weather-beaten faces brimming over with humour at the frequent joke; and in the distance the lap of the ever-encroaching tide; all combined, leave an impression on the mind not to be obtained at any "exhibition," however complete, nor dimmed by the lapse of time however great.

The Pantoon, as the fisherman terms it, was formerly a hot-bed of practical jokes; the stranger generally being the victim. He was considered fortunate if he got through his perambulations with only *one* rotten fish in the nape of his neck; and without being seduced by the artful originators of the "Pump trick." Practical joking of this description, has, however, been abolished, as far as the stranger is concerned, and he will now meet with civility, and readiness to communicate information. The quantity of fish dispatched from Grimsby is enormous, being at the rate of

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more than twelve hundred tons a week, or about seventy thousand tons per annum.

Although the chief, Grimsby is, of course, but one of the many important fishing ports which crowd our coast-line from "John o' Groat's to the Land's End," each of which, on a smaller scale, contributes its share of the immense quantity of fresh fish daily consumed by the thirty-three millions of Her Majesty's subjects in the three kingdoms. Notwithstanding the hundreds upon hundreds of tons daily drawn from its fishing-grounds, the productiveness of the Great North Sea shows no sign of diminution. Only a few weeks ago the cargo of a "trawler" was sold at Grimsby for nearly £400, the largest amount on record realised by one voyage. We frequently read of so many smacks, trawlers, or fishing-boats being lost; but it is surprising what little information is possessed by the public on the different methods of deep-sea fishing practised by them, although surely we should know something of the manner in which the fish we daily meet at table are caught.

Let us follow one of these "trawlers," with the sun playing on her bark-stained sails, as she threads her way amongst the shoals at the mouth of the Humber, leaving nothing of Grimsby visible but its tall water-tower pointing gracefully to the skies. "Nearer," as a fisherman who flattered himself on his knowledge of the inhabitants once drily remarked, "Nearer Heaven b' a good deal than anybody i' Grimsby." Onward, amongst screeching gulls and tumbling porpoises to the neighbourhood of the Dogger-bank, where are situated the famous Silver Pit, Botany Gut, and other celebrated fishing grounds.

While she is plunging along her course we can examine the net (from which the name "trawler" is derived through the manner in which it is dragged or trawled over the bed of the ocean), lying in irregular folds on its immense beam, which is resting on the bulwark of the smack.

The trawler furnishes Grimsby with the majority of its fish; and it is principally in the trawl-net that turbot, soles, brill, and all other ground fish are taken. The net, which is triangular in shape, varies in size according to the power of the smack. It is generally from thirty to forty yards long, and fifteen to twenty yards wide at the mouth; from which it gradually tapers to the extreme narrow end termed the "purse." The mouth is extended and kept open by a strong beam of elm, fixed into the ends of which are heavy iron runners, called trawl-heads, which support the beam some three feet from the bed of the ocean, over which the net is dragged like a sleigh over the snow. An ingenious contrivance termed the ground-rope stirs up the mud and sand in which the fish lie embedded; and as they rise they enter the net, and their fate is sealed.

Our smack, on arriving at the fishing-ground, if the tide and wind be favourable, immediately prepares for work. She is put

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under easy sail, and the net is thrown out narrow end first until the whole is overboard. The beam is then lowered, and got into position by the help of the water and the moving vessel. Extra sail is put on; sufficient tow-rope is paid out—often as much as three hundred yards—and the net gradually sinks to the bottom. The smack keeps steadily on her course, mile after mile, until the tide is done, or the limit of the fishing-ground is reached, when the net is hauled in, a work of very great labour—in rough weather often occupying two or three hours. When the "purse" which contains the fish is reached, it is suspended over the deck by a special tackle, and its living contents, often three quarters of a ton in weight, shot on to it in one glittering and picturesque pile.

The reader can easily imagine the many varieties of fish likely to be captured after five or six hours' working. Here in one huge heap, brilliant with their natural colours, are often found turbot, soles, dog-fish, plaice, skates, crabs, and scores of other strange inhabitants of the sea, enemies and friends alike. They are quickly sorted, the "offal" being thrown overboard, and the good fish packed in ice in the well of the smack. Day after day this process is repeated until sufficient cargo has been obtained, when the smack at once makes for port. Or if the boxing system be in force, the fish is transferred by the aid of small boats to steamers which run with it to port. This system is very distasteful to the fisherman, as it keeps him at sea several weeks at a time, and is, moreover, highly dangerous; many lives being lost in rough weather, in conveying the fish to the steamer. Owing, however, to the strong feeling against this baneful system it has been nearly, if not entirely abolished at Grimsby.

All the year round, in all weathers, hundreds of these trawlers are perpetually at work, sweeping with their huge nets the vast sand plateaus of the Great North Sea; sometimes under smiling skies and before gentle breezes; but oftener amidst the fierce gales and mountainous seas so frequent in this treacherous ocean. Winter, with its fearful gales, is, however, the harvest time of the trawlers. In summer they often lay becalmed for days without wind sufficient to drag the net over the ground.

But steam has been called to the aid even of the fisherman, and a small fleet of steam trawlers, fitted in the most elaborate manner, is now constantly at work.

The principal methods of fishing in practice at Grimsby are trawling, and long-line fishing. The latter, which accords more with our ideas of "fishing," is the principal method employed in the capture of cod, although large numbers are also taken, nearer the shore, with the hand line.

The length of line used by a "codman" is astonishing. A full string, when set, measures a distance of more than seven thousand fathoms; or in more forcible language, stretches over the surface of the sea a distance equal to that which separates St. Paul's from

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the Crystal Palace. The line is kept steady by small anchors at equal distances, and every mile is marked by a small buoy, carrying a tiny mast and flag. Along the whole length of this immense line, at a distance of nine or ten feet apart, are suspended short lines called "snoods," on which the hooks are fixed. Nearly five thousand hooks baited with whelk or lampern are thus temptingly displayed to the voracious cod; the time employed in baiting these hooks is considerable, and the cost of bait is a serious item. Fishing for cod with a whelk is, however, but an enlarged edition of the old story of setting a sprat to catch a mackerel.

When the line is to be hauled in, the smack sails along, making for the little flags at each mile. The fish are unhooked and deposited, many of them alive, in the well of the smack, through which a regular supply of sea water is allowed to circulate by means of holes bored in the bottom of the vessel between two water-tight bulkheads. Smacks very often run home from the Dogger with cargoes of between six and seven hundred cod. Those still alive on the arrival of the vessel in port are transferred to the cod-boxes already described, the remainder being dispatched to London and other markets.

Like the Cockroach, the cod is a most voracious eater, not at all particular as to the nature of its food; and many queer stories are told by fishermen, of jack-knives, bunches of keys, tobacco-pouches and other equally indigestible articles being found in the stomach of the captured cod.

As already stated, the trawl net is employed in the capture of fish keeping close to the bed of the ocean. Another called the drift net is its exact opposite, and it is exclusively by this net that fish which swim near the surface such as mackerel and herring are taken. Although large quantities of these fish are landed at Grimsby, very little drift fishing is carried on by the Grimsby smacks. A drift net at work may be compared to a number of lawn-tennis nets fastened together, end to end, supported at the surface by floats, or buoys, from which they hang perpendicularly in the water, forming, as it were, a wall of network several yards deep and often a *couple of miles* in length. In swimming against, and attempting to force their way through this immense barrier, the fish become entangled in its meshes, where they are securely held until the net is hauled in. The Dog-fish is the fisherman's great enemy. The "long-line" and "drift-net" both form rich larders wherein these sea-curs are able to satisfy their ravenous appetites with the fish which have eluded their murderous chase.

Night is the favourite time for drift-fishing, the net being invariably shot at sunset. The distance to which it should be sunk varies with the state of the weather; and, although everything depends upon its position, the judgment of the fisherman is his only guide.

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It may be too high or too low in the water; in either case the shoals of fish will escape. The presence of a flock of sea-birds often decides the locality in which the net shall be shot, and by experience the fisherman has learned several signs by which the presence of fish may be detected. At best, however, it is but a haphazard system; sometimes after "toiling all night" taking nothing, at others "great multitudes" being caught.

Such, in brief, is the fishing trade of Grimsby, a trade growing in magnitude year by year. Much has been done for both fisherman and "apprentice," but much remains still to be accomplished.

The skipper is the despotic king of his smack, and fearful cruelties are, beyond doubt, frequently practised, fear being the dark cloak under which they are hid. It is only when the heart-piercing cry penetrates to the editor's room, as in a recent case at Hull, that the revolting particulars are brought to light, and the offender to justice.

Many smacks are lost through unseaworthiness, there being no law in force to prevent a smack-owner sending out vessels utterly unfit to contend with the storms of the North Sea.

The baneful practice known as "coopering" requires immediate attention, although its abolition is a difficult problem. Vessels hailing from Dutch and Belgian ports actually find it a remunerative business to cruise among the smacks in the North Sea and supply them with liquor, of course at a cheap rate, but always of a most fiery and inferior quality. The sequel to this practice is but too apparent. Many lives are lost through drunkenness.

Still there are hundreds of kind-hearted and temperate skippers who look well after the welfare and morals of their crews, and it is only by increasing their number that the practices alluded to can be abolished.

In the dead of night, when all the busy world on land is at rest, what a scene the 140,000 square miles of waters constituting the Great North Sea presents. Still the trawler sweeps steadily along its phosphorescent path, and hundreds of fishing luggers, with regulation lights brightly burning, drift with their huge nets with the tide.

Two thousand smacks, and more than thirteen thousand souls, are continuously, day and night, tossing on the waves of this prolific sea.

The fisherman is famous for his skill and daring, but these qualities avail him little in such gales as those which have recently thundered along our coasts, carrying death and desolation to many a home. At a special fisherman's service held at Grimsby a few weeks ago, forty couples of suddenly bereaved widows solemnly passed down the aisle of St. Andrew's Church. The fisherman carries his life in his hand. His avocation is perilous

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enough without the additional danger engendered by drink. And as he retires to his rude bunk for the night, truly can he say with the psalmist of old, "I will lay me down in peace and take my rest, for it is Thou, Lord, only, that makest me dwell in safety."

GEORGE H. ROBINSON.

TWO KISSES.

THIS way we went in old years glimmering now
Through happy tears for my first lover's vow.

Down to those yellow sands we went, and passed
Under the shadow which the brown cliff cast,

Thence to the bright sea's verge we moved, and strayed
Fast by the line of froth the breakers made.

Together, sweet, with the sea's voice and thine
In my tranced ears, we wandered. The bright brine

Seemed conscious of our love; thy gentle hand
For this I clasped more closely. Sea and land

Clasped, too, in love, knew of the love we bore;
And, blessing both, beside the breakers, hoar,

I pressed thee to my bosom and, as now,
Kissed thy red lips and pledged my lover's vow.

RICHARD DOWNEY.

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MR. JUDSON'S HARE.

A Beagling Sketch.

"What a morning for hunting," exclaimed Mr. Tabley, the genial master of the Thorpestone Beagles, as he clambered up to the box of the van.

"Yes, sir," replied Howard, his huntsman, "scent ought to lie proper, that's to say if we only find a hare."

"Ah!" said Mr. Tabley, "there's the rub," and with a heavy sigh he relapsed into moody silence; and well might his heart be filled with gloomy forebodings, for was not the meet that day at Forest House, the seat of Mr. Judson, the ex-corn factor, and had not that meet been proverbially unfortunate, ever since its first institution? Yes, such was indeed the case. This Mr. Judson, having retired from trade with his modest little pile, purchased a small property about four miles from Thorpestone, and was now doing his best to get into, what he termed, "genteel society." His first step was propitious: he subscribed one hundred pounds to the restoration of the cathedral and was immediately visited by the church element of Thorpestone; but, after all, cathedral dignitaries are sometimes rather dull, all deans are not like Sidney Smith, and as Mr. Judson found the dinner parties in the Close rather an ordeal, he turned his attention to the gayer side of Thorpestone society, and, among many other efforts to make himself agreeable, he invited the Thorpestone Beagles to meet at his house twice a season. The first time they met, they had a good run and a capital lunch, and as the field walked home, to a man, they voted Judson as fine a fellow as ever breathed, and that his heart was as good as his sherry; but, alas! every succeeding fixture for the last two seasons the lunch was there but the run was not, for the excellent reason there was not a hare on the place. Things were getting desperate, and Mr. Tabley had to tell Mr. Judson privately that if they had another blank day the fixture must cease. Mr. Judson pondered deeply, and came to the conclusion that somehow or another Thorpeshire hares did not care for his particular land, but why the hares in this individual county should be more fastidious than their brethren elsewhere, was beyond Mr. Judson's philosophy. But be that as it may, no matter how many hares he put on the land, no matter what efforts he made to preserve them, keep them for any length of time he could not. Perhaps if Mr. Judson had been accustomed to country life he would have discovered the reason without all this vain speculation. A canal ran

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alongside the greater part of his property, and bargees are notoriously the most skilful hare poachers in the world. Most of them keep a lurcher or two; as soon as they come to a likely field the dog is put ashore; if there is a hare about the dog is sure, before very long, to course it down; he returns with the spoil to his apparently innocent owner; the barge moves on, and in an hour or so Miss Puss is in the pot. And as Mr. Judson's property was thus conveniently situated, the bargees on the Berkshire Union Canal considerately and most effectually preserved his hares for him.

"Good day to you, gentlemen," said Mr. Tabley, as he drove up to the Hall door. "How d'ye do, Mr. Judson, nice day for sport isn't it?"

"Yes, indeed," replied that gentleman, who was gorgeously clad in a shepherd's plaid shooting coat, cords and gaiters; "and Mr. Tabley, I have *really* got a hare for you this time."

"That's all right," said the master, glancing round to see who were there.

Besides the usual members of the hunt, he was glad to see some well-known faces from that side of the county—most of them first-flight men. There was Hall, from the neighbouring Rockford pack, "a good 'un to follow, a hard 'un to beat;" and there, looking as fresh and tough as ever, was the Rev. Frank Coddington, who, despite his fifty years, was still the best runner to beagles in the county. Languidly stroking his flaxen moustache stood Stanley, once the dashing whip to the Christ Church Beagles and not unknown on the 'Varsity running path, now a shining light on the Oxford circuit, but still able to charge a double with the best of them. Mr. Judson's offer of cherry brandy having been politely declined by all (except a certain ex-dragoon, who for many years had made and consistently kept a rule never to decline a drink at another man's expense, and boasted he could consume any "given" quantity of liquor), Mr. Tabley gave the word and off they started to draw the land behind the house.

Very soon Mr. Judson's statement was confirmed, for scarcely had the pack crashed through the second fence when up got as fine a hare as a sportsman would wish to see.

"Yoicks! Go-one away!" shrieked Howard.

"Steady, gentlemen, please, let the hounds have time," cried the master. "By Jove, Coddington, what the deuce has she got on her hind-leg, looks like a piece of paper; d'ye see?" but before the reverend gentleman had time to express an opinion the hare dived through a gap in the fence and was lost to view. The scent was good and five or six of the best men were soon in front, running hard to the hounds.

"Oh! for the wind and legs of yore," thought Stanley, as he smashed through a regular rasper, Hall just behind him, and a couple of Thorpestone men to the right; over two more fields, here the scent failed a bit, and they got within half a field of the

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hounds, in and out of a huge double, and then *all was over*. The hare, who somehow seemed unable to get away from the pack, doubled back and lay in the ditch, and just as Stanley and Hall landed in the ploughed field, Chorister and Barmaid rushed in and tossed her up.

"Who'—oop, whoop!" shrieked Howard.

"What," cried Mr. Tabley, running up, "you don't mean to say you've killed her already? She looked as if she'd have gone for a month; it's extraordinary."

"Ain't so rum after all, sir," grimly replied Howard, as he whipped off the hounds and dragged the hare out of the ditch, "I don't think anythink could go for long, with a burning scent and this yere tied to its leg."

"By Jove," said Hall, "what's this?" as he cut off a tin case from the poor brute's leg, "looks like a tin of Australian meat anyhow the name's on," so, wiping the mud off, he read—

"*Spriggins's world-renowned game paté, 3s. 6d. per tin, 34s per dozen; wholesale department, Leadenhall Market; retail, 354, Bond Street, W.*"

They all laughed heartily, but the question still remained, how, like the fly in the amber, the deuce had it got there?

"I thought," said Mr. Tabley, "when we put her up, I saw on her hind leg a piece of paper too, but there's no sign of it now."

"Perhaps that's it that old Chorister's got in her mouth," said Coddington, as the old hound, holding what appeared to be a dirty scrap of paper, was stalking so proudly about, endeavouring to avoid the unwelcome attentions he was receiving from the rest of the pack, and still preserve his normal appearance of dignified gravity. Stanley, however, made a grab and successfully rescued the desired object. It turned out to be an ordinary label with some writing on it, which Stanley, having removed the dirt as well as he could, deciphered as follows:

"J. S. sends Mr. Judson the hare as requested, and which, bein' in good condishun, is ready for heating when desired. J. S. also takes the liberty of sending Mr. J. a tin of his World-renowned Game Paté as a Noo Year's present and token of gratitude for past favors; and lest Mr. J. should overlook it, if lying loose in the hamper, J. S., to make sure, has hattached it to the hare's leg.

"Yours obediently,

"JOSEPH SPRIGGINS."

Stanley had scarcely finished, when he heard an awful groan, and on looking up saw Mr. Judson, who had come up unawares, and was looking in the last stage of human misery.

"Oh, Mr. Tabley, oh, gentlemen, I am that sorry that this has happened as I can't express. The truth is, I had a hare ready for you up to Tuesday, and had it watched every day, but yesterday morning my man came and told me it had disappeared. I didn't

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know what to do. I sent to all the farmers round and not one of them could give me one, so I wired to my poulterer, Spriggins, to send me a live hare immediately. He, thinking I wanted it for some future dinner, I suppose, tied his beastly paté on to its leg. It never arrived till twelve last night, and then I took the hamper out into the fields and released the hare, and, as it was pitch dark, I never noticed that cursed tin that has spoiled your run and made such a fool of me."

"Well, never mind," said Mr. Tabley, laughing, "it wasn't your fault; and, after all, it shows you wished to show us sport or wouldn't have gone to all this trouble and expense. However, we must push on, as our next draw will be Farmer Stubble's meadows, which is nearly three miles away, and it is well past twelve now. Forrard on, Howard."

Next morning Mr. Tabley received a note from Mr. Judson saying that, on the whole, he thought the fixture had better be discontinued; that he forwarded a donation of five guineas to the pack, and trusted that Mr. Tabley would propose him as a member of the hunt at the next general meeting; and, as the worthy master observed, "the next best thing in life after having foxes and hares for your neighbours to kill, is to help to the utmost of your ability to kill those of other people." A sentiment all true sportsmen will heartily endorse.

J. RANDAL.

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THE *TIMES* DAILY WEATHER CHART.

EVERY reader of the *Times* newspaper must have noticed the chart, or map, prefixed to the official weather reports published by that paper in common with the principal London and provincial journals. But there are probably few who bestow more than a passing glance upon it; the great majority, even of those who take an intelligent interest in the weather, and are in the habit of reading the remarks which follow the chart, apparently regarding the chart itself as intended only for experts in meteorological science and as beyond the comprehension of the unscientific reader. And yet the possession of a little elementary information in regard to the relations which are known to exist between the distribution of atmospheric pressure and the direction and force of the winds and the general character of the weather over any given area would not only make the chart intelligible to an ordinary reader, but would make it, as it is designed to be, a really useful adjunct to the written remarks.

It will be the aim of this paper to supply this information in a form as simple and as free from technicalities as the subject admits.

The chart consists of a small outline map of Western Europe, embracing the whole of the British Islands and France, together with Norway and Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium, and part of North Germany, and gives a general view of the distribution of atmospheric pressure, and of the state of the weather over this area at six p.m., on the evening previous to publication, as deduced from observations telegraphed to the meteorological office from about fifty selected stations, ranging from Bodö (north of Norway), and Haapranda (north of Sweden), both within the Arctic Circle, on the north, to Corunna (north of Spain), and Toulon on the south, and from Valencia (south-west of Ireland), and Stornoway (north-west of Scotland), on the west to Cuxhaven (North Germany), and Stockholm on the east. The observations summarised in the chart comprise the readings of the barometer, and dry and wet bulb thermometer, the direction and force of the wind, and the state of the weather, whether dry or wet, clear or foggy, etc., at the stations above referred to. It is, however, with the distribution of atmospheric pressure over this area, and more especially over the British Islands, as shown on the chart that we shall be principally concerned, and as the significance and utility of this chart, for

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purposes of weather prediction, depend mainly on this feature in it; let us first of all see that we clearly understand what we mean by this term, "distribution of atmospheric pressure." When observations are made of the readings of the barometer at a number of different places over any considerable area at any given time, there will always be found to be differences in the height of the barometer at the different stations (after the necessary corrections have been made for differences of elevation above sea-level).

But as the height of the mercury in the barometer is an exact measure of the pressure of the atmosphere above it, it follows that these differences in the height of the barometers represent differences in the pressure of the atmosphere. The amount of these differences varies greatly, and is usually large in stormy, unsettled weather, and comparatively small in fine and calm weather. But over an area such as that of the United Kingdom, there is never perfect uniformity in the readings of the barometer, and we may, therefore, assume that there is never perfect uniformity in the pressure of the atmosphere. Again, when the barometer readings over a sufficiently large area are compared, it will be found that these differences in pressure do not occur capriciously, but in a more or less regular order, and that pressure tends to increase or diminish in all directions, from a centre or centres, so as to form regions or areas of low and high pressure of a circular or approximately circular form; the former being technically known as depressions or cyclones, and the latter as anti-cyclones. Very little is known at present as to the nature and origin of these irregularities in the distribution of atmospheric pressure; but so far as our observations go, they lead to the conclusion that depressions or cyclones are of the nature of atmospheric eddies or whirlpools, analogous to the eddies which may be seen on the surface of a stream of water when the even flow of the current is interrupted by some obstacle in its course, and that areas of high pressure, or anti-cyclones, are the results of accumulations of air, where the atmosphere has, from any cause, become heaped, or piled up, over a portion of the earth's surface, as, for instance, through the overflow of heated air from the equatorial regions towards the poles.

Now it had long been known that the wind tended to circulate round areas of low atmospheric pressure, and (in Northern latitudes) always in the same direction, so as to have the centre of the depression, or region of lowest barometer, on the left hand. But the subject had been regarded mainly in connection with great atmospheric disturbances, or cyclones in the popular sense of the term. And it was reserved to the eminent Dutch meteorologist, Professor Buys Ballot, about the year 1860, first to state the law or principle in such a manner as to make it capable of general application under all conditions of atmospheric pressure. The law or rule, as formulated by Buys Ballot, may be stated as follows:—"When there is a difference between the height of the

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barometer at any two places, the wind will blow at right angles to (*i.e.* right across) a straight line joining the two places, and so as to have the place where the barometer is lowest on the left hand."

This, which is generally known as "Buys Ballot's Law," may be regarded as the foundation of the system of modern weather forecasts.

And now let us see how this principle or law is illustrated in the daily weather charts.

In the margin will be found fac-similes of the charts which appeared in the *Times* for June 15th and June 24th. In both charts there will be found certain curved lines technically known

as Isobaric lines or Isobars, *i.e.* lines of equal pressure, as representing places where the barometer stands at the same height, and where the pressure of the atmosphere is therefore the same. In the former of the two charts, which gives a general view of the state of the weather over Western Europe at 6 p.m. of June 15th, will be noticed a dotted circle to the eastward of England, marked with the figures 29·8, and indicating that within the area covered by this circle lay a depression, or region of low pressure, in which the barometer was as low as 29 inches and eight-tenths of an inch, while to the westward of this circle are seen other

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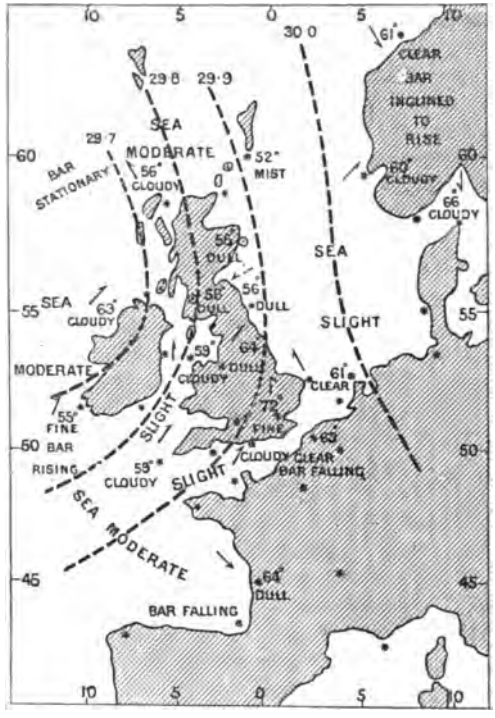
curved lines marked 29·9, 30·0 and 30·1, and indicating that in the places through which these lines pass the barometer stood at points corresponding to these figures.

It is plain, then, according to Buys Ballot's Law, that the wind, circulating round the depression in the east in such a manner as to have the depression on the left hand, would cause a northerly current over England. And this is what was in fact experienced, a cold N. wind having prevailed during the day, and as long as the conditions of pressure indicated in the chart continued.



The chart for six p.m. of June 24th shows an opposite state of things, atmospheric pressure being on this occasion lowest to the westward of Ireland, and increasing in an easterly direction, the Isobar of 29·7 being shown over Ireland, 29·8 over the Irish Sea and Scotland, 29·9 over the east of England, and 30·0 over Holland and the North Sea, while the wind and weather corresponded to these altered conditions, the wind being S. and the temperature comparatively high; the thermometer in London marking 72 degrees as compared with 55 degrees at the same time on June 15th.

So far we have been considering the influence of a depression or area of low pressure regarded as stationary, but, as a matter of

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fact, these depressions are rarely, if ever, quite stationary, but travel with a velocity varying from ten or fifteen to fifty or even seventy miles an hour. This movement of the whole depression system is, of course, quite distinct from the movement of the winds which accompany it, and is one of the most important of the considerations that have to be taken into account by those who have the responsibility of framing weather forecasts or issuing storm warnings, for it will be evident from what has been said above that when a depression traverses the country the winds and weather at the places along its track will change as the centre of the depression changes its position in regard to them. In order to illustrate this let us take the case—a very common one in these latitudes—of a depression coming to us from the Atlantic and passing over our islands from west to east. As the depression approaches the west of Ireland, the barometer there will begin to fall under its influence, and the wind, in accordance with Buys Ballot's law, will shift to the southward, or, if already southerly, will increase in force. If the fall of the barometer is considerable in amount, and the increase in the force of the wind is rapid, it may be assumed that an important disturbance is approaching our area, and warnings that southerly gales may be expected will be issued to our western ports, and as the depression continues to travel eastward and there are indications that the southernly gales in front of it will spread to our more eastern stations, these will in turn be warned. On the other hand, when the centre of the depression has passed to the eastward of any place lying near to its central track the conditions previously prevailing at that place will be reversed. The wind will veer to the northward, the dense clouds and heavy rains which accompany the centre of the depression will pass away with it and give place to a clear sky and a drier and more bracing air. Similarly places lying to the northward or southward of the storm's track will experience changes of wind and weather corresponding to their position relatively to its centre, all of which may, by the aid of the telegraph giving timely notice of the direction and rate of its movements, be predicted at least some hours in advance.

Unfortunately for our meteorological office the great majority of the depressions by which our weather is influenced come to us from the westward, from the mid-Atlantic, where there are of course no stations from which timely warning of their approach can be obtained. Our weather department is thus at a great disadvantage as compared with that of the United States, which receives telegraphic reports from a vast net-work of stations covering the region from which storms may be expected, or as compared with those of Continental Europe, which receive notice from our outlying stations of most of the storms by which Western Europe is visited.

It is greatly to the credit of our office that, notwithstanding

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this disadvantage, it should be able to give from twelve to twenty-four hours' warning of most of the great storms which affect our coasts, and to frame forecasts which are on the whole fairly successful of the weather that may be expected from day to day in the various districts of the United Kingdom. That there should be occasional instances of failure, more especially in the case of the daily forecasts, is inevitable in the present imperfect state of the science of meteorology. But few who are competent to form an opinion on the subject will deny that, considering the difficulties which the office has to encounter and the limited means at its disposal, it has attained quite as large a measure of success as could be reasonably expected.

G. T. RYVES, F.M.S.

SONNET.

WE are more fortunate Titans, gods and kings
Of Nature, for we tame the olden fears,
And ride in spirit on the very spheres
That throned the gods, and lo! the thunderings
And winged decrees of blue-eyed Zeus are things
Awful no more; Apollo and his peers
Have failed in prophecy; and round our seers
The universe revolves like Saturn's rings;
Yet as when day whirls down the mighty sun
Lovers of night see gleaming star on star,
In many millions mightier than that one
To all who dare o'er-pass the shallow bar
Of mere appearances, some few there are
More than content with what the times have done.

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NIGHT.

ERE the day departed quite
"Bring" he said "out raiment white
Opal shot with silver sheen,
Softest rose and tenderest green,
That ye deck the maiden Night."

Seraph-like on wings of flame
Tingeing the still seas with fire
From the west the swift winds came,
Brought cloud raiment to attire
Her that kneeled till day was done
In the shadow of the sun.

But the colours changed and fled
When Night came with bended head
Wonderful with moon and star
Diamond dewed as violets are
Drooping in their grassy bed.

Humble tho' a diadem
Crowned her with full many a gem
Daughter of the sun, whom she
Followed still so faithfully
Stooping to his garment's hem,
Like a maid of low degree.

Like a lover of great light,
Silver heart of purity,
Type of high humanity,
Yearning for the infinite
For the things that cannot be
And a world no eye may see.

M. C. ROBERTS

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EDGAR ALLAN POE.

AMONGST all the English speaking writers of generally acknowledged genius there has probably been none who has been more lavishly praised, or more widely condemned, than the unfortunate American whose writings would alone have been sufficient to constitute a national literature, even had others of his fellow-countrymen produced nothing. At the same time it would be safe to assert that much both of praise and condemnation is, in this country at least, based upon wholly insufficient *data*. Of the many who speak, even enthusiastically, of the artist's work, how many could pass a fairly satisfactory examination in either poetry or prose? If it came to the test, the chances are that nine out of ten would find their practical knowledge restricted under the first heading to *The Raven*, *Annabel Lee*, *The Bells*, and perhaps *Ulalume;* under the second to *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, and some half-a-dozen others of the more popular tales. Poe's mystic and philosophical writings, such as *Eureka*, are practically unknown, and it may be added that his reputation has to some extent suffered from an entirely false and unfair style of criticism. The world has not the slightest business with the private life, or the moral character, of an author, except in so far as these may affect the productions of his genius, and the most hostile of critics cannot assert that Poe's writings are in any way tinged with the outcome of those excesses which unhappily darkened and shortened his brilliant career. Granting that he had broken the entire Decalogue—a feat of which not even Mr. Griswold has accused him—in what possible manner would that affect the value of his published writings, unless these advocated, directly or indirectly, an imitation of his crime? And it must at once be plainly stated that there is no one line or sentence in all the collected works of Edgar Allan Poe which even the most perverted taste could torture into a suggestion of sensualism; indeed the first thing that strikes one after a careful study of the writings as a whole is the singular purity of thought and feeling which pervades them.

No doubt the common verdict is based in a great measure upon the original American life of the author, which was the result of his own unfortunate choice of a biographer—an act which can never cease to cause wonder in the minds of those who have studied Mr. Griswold's narrative in the light of later and more trustworthy

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works on the subject—notably the masterly defence set up by Mr. John H. Ingram in the preface to his splendid collection of Poe's prose and poetical works. But for some incomprehensible reason, there seems almost from the outset to have been a dead set in certain quarters against the unlucky man's reputation. Five-and-twenty years ago, the *Edinburgh Review*,[1] in an article as one-sided as it was bigoted, attacked the author in a manner which is as exasperating for its strong Philistinism as it is ridiculous for its utter misappreciation of the requirements of the case. Not to dwell at any length upon this precious production, it may be noted amongst other charges that the writer positively denied all sense of humour to the man who wrote *Hans Pfaal, Diddling Considered as one of the Exact Sciences*, and *How to write a Blackwood Article*, the last named one of the most delicious bits of sarcastic burlesque of the present century! Let this pass as unworthy of serious consideration, and let us come to an inquiry into what were the special characteristics which distinguished the writings of Edgar Allan Poe from those of his contemporaries, and set him as it were apart.

It may be convenient to begin with his prose writings. The first strong impression upon the mind of any dispassionate reader will be made by the singular logical turn displayed in some of the more striking tales. However, the understanding may revolt against the probability, or even the possibility, of such wild romances as those of *Arthur Gordon Pym*, or the *Descent into the Maelstrom*, one feels all the time of reading as if they must be true; one has unconsciously granted some apparently insignificant premise, and, by a chain of natural and sober deduction, from this the rest follows as a matter of course. Take, for example, the second named of these tales. The two points upon which it turns are perfectly intelligible, the one physical, the other scientific, viz., that it is possible at certain stages of the tide to cross the semi-mythical water in safety, and that cylindrical bodies revolving *in gurgite vasto* are less amenable to centripetal attraction than others. Grant these two points, and there is nothing monstrous in the tale; the same might be predicated of others. But let us classify the author's characteristics, so as to arrive at a general estimate of his work. Setting aside that already noted, these are mainly three in number, and may for our present purpose be classified as Mystery—with a special leaning towards what are commonly known as supernatural phenomena, Grotesqueness and Humour, and under each head I propose to make some slight comment upon one or more of the prose tales which particularly illustrate the feature under immediate consideration. But before doing so, it will be necessary to refer briefly to certain of Poe's prose stories which cannot conveniently be classified under

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, vol. i., c. vii., p. 419, Jan. 1 and April, 1858.

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either of the headings in question, and which are yet amongst the most striking efforts of his genius, I mean those realistic studies of which the most powerful is undoubtedly *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, just as the most generally bepraised is *The Mystery of Marie Roget*. With regard to this latter, I must confess my inability to understand wherein lies the extraordinary fascination which it has exercised over the minds of many cleverer men it has always seemed to me to be singularly unsatisfactory. As all students of Poe will remember, it is the relation of an imaginary criminal process in Paris, consequent upon the mysterious disappearance, and supposed murder, of a young girl of the humbler classes, the idea being suggested by an actual case which took place, in the year 1842, in New York. But, admirably worked up as the main body of the narrative certainly is, the interest ceases just where it might have been expected to culminate, and the careful reader, whose curiosity has been excited to the utmost, and who has laboriously followed the details of surmise and evidence, is left with absolutely no solution of the mystery! A foot-note in Mr. Ingram's collection, was probably intended in some measure as an apology for the disappointment involved; but, granting fully that the author's primary object was to aid in clearing up the mystery of the real case, I submit that the course adopted was inadmissible for the purposes of fiction. For all practical purposes the sketch is a romance, and should have been treated as such; Poe was perfectly justified in availing himself of real facts, but as an artist he was bound to make them lead up to some *dénouement*—else he was hardly entitled to surround his characters with imaginary surroundings, or to change the *venue*. In doing the latter he has sacrificed force, and has in one place involved himself in a blunder, strange in so wonderfully accurate a writer—the little sons of the innkeeper, Madame Deluc, are represented as being in the habit of searching the thicket where they made their discovery for the bark of the *sassafras*, which, however plentiful it may be in the woods about New York, would certainly not be a likely thing to find in the neighbourhood of the Barrière du Roule! Still it is impossible not to admire the delicate yet trenchant sarcasm in the strictures upon ordinary newspaper criticisms of evidence, and the almost superhuman acuteness of the Chevalier Dupin, whose power of logical deduction must be taken as representing the ordinary mental attitude of Poe himself. This is shown to greater advantage in the course of reasoning, which resulted in an identification of the real murderer of the unlucky Madame D'Espanaye and her daughter; what could be more ingenious than the gradual evolution of a probable simian actor in the tragedy out of a tuft of hair and an imperfect window-fastening, unless it be the identification, in *The Purloined Letter*, of the important document? The best point in the latter is that the chain of reasoning which led to the discovery is strictly

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in accordance with the dictates of common-sense, the mode of concealment is precisely that which a man, just cunning enough to over-reach himself, would be likely to adopt. But, brilliant as they are, these particular sketches appeal specially to only a certain class of mind, and may now be dismissed as having received sufficient consideration; let us revert to the original scheme.

Under the first heading there is some difficulty in selecting examples, owing partly to an *embarras de richesses*, and partly to the extent in which the second assigned element enters into some of the more salient examples, as witness *Hop-frog*, which, in spite of its ghastly horror, shall be relegated to the second division. Let us take three of the most striking, viz.: *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *William Wilson*, and, in some respects most striking of all, *Ligeia*. The first named represents, with a hideous reality, the agony of a hypochondriacal student, whose melancholy has developed into secret madness, on discovering that he has, half-consciously, consigned his dearly loved sister to a living tomb. "Roderick Usher" is represented as addicted to the occult sciences, and the quaint catalogue of his favourite works has been made the occasion, in certain quarters, for some not too candid or generous strictness upon Poe's knowledge of literature. But let that pass, and let anyone who has shuddered over the weird story recall the description, growing in intensity as it proceeds, of the sounds from the vault which herald the apparition of the dying girl, of the miserable hero's wild burst of frenzy, or, as a piece of lurid word-painting, of the catastrophe when the accursed house rives asunder and plunges down into the sullen moat. In sober earnest, I know of nothing more awful, unless it be the last scenes of "The Duchess of Malfy," and indeed, Poe always appears to me to have possessed, in common with Nathaniel Hawthorne at times, something of the spirit of Webster or Marlowe. *William Wilson* is probably the most distressing piece of pseudo-autobiography—if the phrase may pass muster—which the world has produced. There can be little doubt that the poor genius wrote it from his heart of hearts, with bitter self-reproach, in utter despair, not unlikely with overflowing eyes. The gradual deterioration of the man is so terribly sad; the gradual silencing of that extremely untrustworthy guide, conscience, and above all the awful trace of probably congenital insanity, that fatal heritage which cursed the world, and themselves, with Nero and Charles IX. And then there comes in such pitiful contrast the description of the old school at Stoke Newington—a reminiscence of innocent boyish days—which shows how keen, how susceptible to the influences of beauty in Art or Nature, was the man. Not to multiply instances on that point, let anyone read *The Domain of Arnheim*, and say if Edgar Allan Poe was not a born artist. *Ligeia* remains, as has been said, the strangest and most powerful of the sketches which have been

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chosen as illustrating the branch of the subject. Had it no other claim on the attention, it must always be remembered as the original vehicle by which was given to the world that magnificent charnel-house lyric "The Conqueror Worm." But this is far from being its only merit; it is most valuable as giving a necessary clue to one phase of the author's character, *viz.*, his leaning towards the occult world, and indirectly suggesting the source from which he, like another great master of the English language, drew both inspiration and a fallacious relief. In reading such passages as the description of the pentagonal bridal chamber, or the successive resuscitations of the Lady Rowena, one is infallibly reminded of some of De Quincey's recorded visions, but there is no need to insist upon this point. The two ideas which pervade the whole are primarily the ever fascinating one of metempsychosis, and secondarily that of suspended animation; these two in their respective beauty and grimness seem to have had a singular attraction for Poe; we trace their influence in many other places throughout his writings, notably in *Morella*, more gently in *Eleanora* and above all in *The Case of M. Valdemar*, probably the most ghastly tissue of horrors that has been written in the present century, not even excepting Mr. Julian Hawthorne's *Archibald Malmaison*, which I honestly own I do not care to read alone at night.

It is almost a relief to turn to the grotesque element in Poe's works, and here again let us select three elucidatory studies, viz.: *Hop-frog*, *The Gold Bug*, and *The Devil in the Belfry*, each in its different way a distinctive example of the quality which I have chosen thus to describe. The first is not so well known as it deserves to be. It may briefly be predicated that the original *motif* was obviously suggested by a historical incident, *viz.*, the catastrophe which finally unsettled the weak reason of the unhappy Charles VI. of France. But, disgusting as are the outrages committed upon the dwarf and his love by the drunken king and servile courtiers, and terrible as is the narrative of Hop-frog's vengeance, the mind is diverted throughout by little touches which amply bear out the assertion that a feeling for the grotesque is the most distinctive element in the tale. It would be easy to give plentiful examples in proof of this, but one brief extract may suffice; the king has just dashed the wine in Trippeta's face:

"There was a dead silence for about half a minute, during which the falling of a leaf or of a feather might have been heard. It was interrupted by a low, but harsh and protracted *grating* sound which seemed to come at once from every corner of the room.

"'What—what—*what* are you making that noise for?' demanded the king, turning furiously to the dwarf.

"'I—I? How could it have been me?'

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"The sound appeared to come from without,' observed one of the courtiers. 'I fancy it was the parrot at the window, whetting his bill upon his cage wires.'

"'True,' replied the monarch, as if much relieved by the suggestion, 'but on the honour of a knight I could have sworn that it was the grinding of this vagabond's teeth.'"

Here will naturally occur to the reader the grim, yet quaint, simile, in another tale, with reference to the murdered man's heart, "a low, dull, quick sound—much such a sound as a watch makes when enveloped in cotton." Conceive of the mind which, in the height of such tremendous situations, could take refuge, so to speak, in the contemplation of figures which, with any less powerful context would seem trivial! *The Gold Bug*, as most people will remember, is an account of the discovery of Captain Kidd's buried treasure by means of a cryptogram, the key to which is about as ingenious as anything that was ever invented as the solution of a pre-arranged mystery. It is necessary only to touch in general terms on this capital romance, referring specially to the study of the old negro servant Jupiter, with his semi-filial, semi-paternal love for and care of his master. When he prepares to administer parental discipline to Legrand, and is disarmed only by the sight of his wan face, one really wonders what notion of humour can be entertained by any writer who could deny the possession of that quality to Poe! Finally, if anyone wants a thorough specimen of grotesque farce, let him turn to the description of Vondervottimeitis and its inhabitants, as good a satire on Dutch habits of extreme method and conservatism as could have been penned.

On second thoughts, space would not suffice to note all the numerous instances of wit and humour which force themselves upon us in going over the collected works, and their discovery and enjoyment must in the main be left to each individual reader. Let me however draw attention to one of the most laughable, as it is one of the least familiar, *The Thousand and Second Tale of Scheherazade*, simply inimitable as a burlesque and a satire on the follies of society at the time, as well as an ingenious description under allegorical forms of the wonders of nature and science. The ending is admirable, when the king, after swallowing some marvels, gradually begins to have his doubts, and at length indignantly repudiates belief in the monstrosities of feminine apparel, and informs his garrulous spouse that "Upon the whole you might as well get up and be throttled," which the lady, like a dutiful wife, proceeds to do, comforting herself, in truly feminine fashion, with the reflection that her lord and master has, to use a slightly vulgar proverb, "cut off his nose to be revenged upon his own face," as her stock of anecdotes was not nearly exhausted.

Of *Eureka*, which is probably the author's least known, as well

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as his most laborious work, it is not my intention to speak at any length; it is an intensely painful instance of misapplied genius and scientific knowledge. The nature of this long, thoughtful treatise may be generally gained from the following passage, concluding the essay, and seeming to point to a sort of vaguely conceived Buddhistic theory on the part of the writer:—

"Think that the sense of individual identity will be gradually merged in the general consciousness—that Man, for example, ceasing imperceptibly to feel himself Man, will at length attain that awfully triumphant epoch when he shall recognise his existence as that of Jehovah. In the meantime bear in mind that all is Life, Life—Life within Life—the less within the greater, and all within the *Spirit Divine*."

No doubt such a rhapsody is distressing, but after all it is only the logical outcome of the theories of Protestantism and the Pilgrim Fathers, and it is hardly fair to blame Poe if, knowing no truer teaching, he, with his logical turn of mind, carried out supposed first principles to their obvious sequence.

The critical essays are as sound as they are brilliant, notably those on "The Rationale of Verse," and on "The Poetic Principle," which might be studied with advantage by all young aspirants to the trick of writing verse, only it seems almost like Pegasus at plough that a born poet, who naturally needed no vulgar teaching, should have spent his powers in producing such handbooks, admirable as they are. They might, however, prove useful as guides to would-be criticisers of poets. Some of the best things Poe has ever written are contained in the short, pithy passages in the "Marginalia" and kindred jottings; it is no exaggeration to say that in these he at times rivals even La Bruyère. Take, for instance, this:

"In examining trivial details we are apt to overlook essential generalities. Thus M——, in making a to-do about the 'typographical mistakes' in his book, has permitted the printer to escape a scolding which he *did* richly deserve—a scolding for a 'typographical mistake' of really vital importance—the mistake of having printed the book at all."

Or the following, which at the present day, apart from the fact of the author's nationality, is not unworthy of consideration:

"The *vox populi*, so much talked about to so little purpose, is, possibly, that very *vox et preterea nihil* which the countryman in Catullus mistook for a nightingale."

But enough of Poe's prose works, let us speak for a moment of his poetry.

At the risk of giving offence to some, it must frankly be said that Poe's poetical gifts have as a whole been much over-estimated, and his fame in the future will probably rest in the main on his prose works. Any competent critic who will take the trouble dispassionately to study the collected poems from beginning to end,

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must acknowledge that the author's reputation in this branch of art depends upon some half-a-dozen fine pieces, having a general similarity in thought, feeling, and even in expression; and it would be difficult to name any poet of eminence—Coleridge, perhaps, excepted—who with some magnificent work has published so much, in a corresponding ratio, that can at best be described as mediocre. Of course, the two most familiar, as they are two of the best, are "The Raven" and "The Bells"; thanks partly to their natural music, and partly to their frequent occurrence as public recitations, these are as much household words with us as, say "The Dream of Eugene Aram" or "Horatius," and they deserve to be. The former, especially, has successfully stood that test of excellence in a poem that frequent parodies, however familiar they may be to one, fail to impair its first charm. But, to my thinking, at least, incomparably finer is the shorter poem "Lenore," both in sentiment and in versification; and "Ulalume," which many would rank next in order of merit, cannot compare with such pieces as "Eldorado" or "For Annie," which latter contains one of the most sorrowful stanzas, when the poet's career is had in remembrance, that was ever penned. Poe was at his best when at his simplest; in his attempts at higher flights he shows a tendency to become turgid, and at times almost unintelligible, whilst his rhythm is often surprisingly faulty considering his own lucid comments on the theory of prosody.

As I have already asserted, I hold, in common with the Poet Laureate, if one may judge by one of the most forcible of his shorter pieces, that the public has no right to concern itself with the private life of authors. Still so much has been said on different sides about Poe's unhappy habits of intemperance that it may be permissible to briefly touch on the subject, with reference to a theory as to their true nature and origin. Charles Baudelaire, in one of the most graceful tributes that has been paid to the dead man's memory, inclines to suppose that he had resort to intoxication with the deliberate intent of stimulating the imagination; I doubt this extremely, and should be very sorry to believe that such a genius could have resort to so paltry and cold-blooded an expedient. Is it not much more probable that the fits of excess were the result of a misguided attempt to remove the languor and nervous depression consequent upon over-taxation of a too highly sensitive brain? So far as I can discover, it has never been proved that Poe habitually drank to excess *in the vulgar sense of the term*, though, no doubt, he often exceeded what could be borne by so frail a body, joined to so excitable a temperament; of course this was foolish and wrong, but surely it is a cause for our compassion rather than for the howl of reprobation, as if there were no other sin in the world, and he were the only man of note who had ever committed it! It is so very easy to cast the first stone! As some indication of what the poor fellow suffered in the matter, let me

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conclude these few remarks with his own words, the stanza of which I spoke but now:

"And oh! of all tortures
That torture the worst
Has abated—the terrible
Torture of thirst,
For the naphthaline river
Of Passion accurst:
I have drank of a water
That quenches all thirst:"

The River of Death, to wit, poor soul! But those are hardly the utterances of a wilful, besotted debauchee!

B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING.

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TIME.

OCTOBER, 1883.

A REAL QUEEN.

CHAPTER II.

They dead? Not they! For vain the boast
Of flesh or blood to slay a ghost:
Dead? Nay—when phantoms feign to die
They but increase and multiply,
And ghosts of faith, when hunted out,
Make double room for ghosts of Doubt,
Who, like Sir Hercules of yore,
For ten crushed heads finds twenty more.
An honest Goblin's twice as true
As half the lights that dazzle you.

IT may be remembered, or forgotten, that in the days when Silver Moldwarp was in business as a practical archæologist at Crossmarsh, he used, by way of recreation in the evening, to frequent an unpretending tavern called the "Feathers." The "Feathers" still flourished, in spite of time and change, though the thirst of not a few of its customers was quenched for ever. To say that one evening a number of the parishioners of Crossmarsh were vainly endeavouring to quench theirs would be an entirely safe proposition, because there never was an evening in the year when some of them were not, while it would be altogether too vague for the purposes of History, who insists upon accuracy in dates, in order, no doubt, to be as loose as she likes in all really important things.

When, however, the choice lies among some thousands of evenings as the date of a proceeding which remained the same in its incidents, however often it was repeated, accuracy becomes obviously impossible. So after all it must suffice to say once the sun set, and, in that same sense, that once a number

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of parishioners of Crossmarsh were at the "Feathers," drinking ale.

"Yes: 'tis true as gold," said Giles Fletcher. "I was at Laxham market my own self, and nobody else's: and I heard it as plain as that mug there. And so you'll see."

"Ah, but Mr. Fletcher," said the new rector's groom, "if everything was to be true one hears, this would be a muddlesome sort of a world. It doesn't depend on ears if a thing's true, but on the tongue."

"And not too much on that," said the parish clerk. "Seeing's believing—I goes by the eye."

"Then, Mr. Crow," objected a mild shepherd in a corner, "if you was a blind man, you'd believe nought, nohow?"

"That's gammon," said the clerk. "That's what that is, gammon. When I say the eye, I mean what I see by. And a blind man with a bit of sense can see cheese from chalk just as well as if he'd got an eye for every finger——"

"Aye, but, Mr. Crow—suppose he'd lost his fingers too? I seed a chap once at Laxham fair that got no arms nor legs, but stood on his head, and swallowed his drink topside down. A wonderful sight for to see!"

"And so you'll see!" resumed Giles Fletcher, whom these metaphysicians had for the moment thrown out of the running. "When I hear with my own ears a man tell me something with his own tongue, and when that man's own father to the lad that runs of a lawyer's errands, I ain't far out, I reckon, though I never lost so much as a toe. Topside down, indeed! What's that to Fane's cottage being sold?"

"Come, Mr. Fletcher," said the groom, "nobody meant no offence, I'm sure. I'm uncommon pleased to hear it, for one. Crossmarsh is a nice place, but there's no saying but what, for anybody that's lived t'other side of Lowmoor, 'tis dull. The 'Feathers' is a good house, and so's the home-brewed, however 'tis took: but there's a terrible want of company. There's my master; but of course I don't reckon him: and there's the doctor, but he don't count neither; and there's Mr. Hargrave, but he's never at home; and that's all. What we want is a real, good, comfortable family, that'll keep company all the year round, with London gentlemen and ladies in the servants' hall, and keep the place alive. We'll get along then."

"No, no, we was never like that, at Crossmarsh," said Mr. Crow. "That's not our style. Ah, we'll never see the like of the old times, when Squire Fane were grubbing up the Knoll, and Squire Hargraves were riding his mare over nigh every day, and a chap from foreign parts—Moldwarp by name—was fiddling your head off, and conjuring your nose into somebody else's shoe, and Parson Pitcairn was preaching, and I were first helping him: those were the days; nothing like 'em now. Life—ah, that was the life for me!"

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"*I* mind Moldwarp," said Giles Fletcher. "But there was one thing he couldn't do: he could whistle, but he couldn't sing, You'll mind, Mr. Crow, how he and I sang 'Brakes o' Barley,' verse and verse, for a quart, and how he stuck at the nineteenth. and I went on to the end?"

"Aye, Giles; and how when you'd finished you found yourself tied fast in your chair, and couldn't get out—Ha, ha! Ah, what times were they—nothing like 'em now. Talk o' life! 'Twas because we lived too fast, I'm afeard, in the times of Squire Fane and Parson Pitcairn. I reckon we burnt our candle both ends and the middle as well. I wonder who the new folks 'll be."

"The lawyer's lad's father thought 'twas some sort of a lady," said Giles. "He said, to the Queen. But I told him I didn't come to market to buy gammon—so that were one for he and two for I."

"Aye: they think they're uncommon sharp, at Laxham. The Queen, indeed! Well, 'twon't make much difference, whoever it may be. We've done without anybody at the cottage now this twelve year, and got used: and 'tisn't like as if Miss Rosamond or Miss Sophia was coming home."

"And who might they be?" asked the groom.

"Eh?" asked Mr. Crow, with some surprise. "Well, my lad, never you mind if you don't know. How was sheep going at Laxham, Mr. Fletcher, pretty fair?"

The groom, as indeed he seldom lost an opportunity of letting Crossmarsh know, had come from a greater and wider world, felt that the change of topic had been made with an intention—either with the favourite object of excluding a stranger from too intimate an acquaintance with the hereditary mysteries of Crossmarsh, or else of piquing his curiosity into asking a question. Curiosity was just getting the better of the dignified indifference of a man of the world, when——

"Good evening, gentlemen," said a strong, but not very genial voice: and the parliament of Crossmarsh perceived that to-night's was to be no ordinary session. A stranger was among them; and not only a stranger, but one who, in calling the company gentlemen, spoke with knowledge of the article. "I suppose there's no objection to my smoking my pipe in here? The landlord wanted to put me into solitary confinement—but a man's own self isn't very lively company, so——"

"And you're welcome, sir, I'm sure," said the clerk: for it must not be supposed that the people of Crossmarsh were boors. They were not of the north, where every man is better than his neighbour, nor yet of the east, but of the west, where churls are few, and men do not hold it impossible that they can have betters.

The visitor, a large man with a big beard, took the first seat that came to hand, filled a meerchaum pipe, and ordered cider.

"It's a fine coast you've got here," said he, to break the spell of

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observant and curious silence caused by his coming. "You're a bit behind the times down here, it seems to me. You ought to have a branch line to Laxham, and build an hotel—you'd have visitors by the shoal."

"Yes, sir," said the rector's groom, instinctively lifting his thumb to his forehead. "That's what I say myself—having lived in places where they makes the most of theirselves."

The gentleman might be a painter, or he might be an angler: for both painters and anglers, those pioneers of the bricklayer, had discovered the cliffs and the streams of Crossmarsh full half a dozen years ago. However, time would show. Even curiosity was patient and leisurely there as yet, and took its time.

"I walked over from Laxham," said he. "Not much to see by the road. By the way, though, what was that big building I passed to the right, about six or eight miles from here, beyond the downs? Do you know?"

"Aye, sir; I know," said Giles Fletcher. "That be one of Queen Victoria's palaces—that be: where she asks you come and stop, and plenty to eat and nothing to pay."

At this venerable joke, cracked so often at Crossmarsh that it had become to be looked upon as an unsurpassable gem and inexhaustible fountain of humour, Giles Fletcher chuckled as if he had invented it on the spot, and a grin spread over the parlour.

"Queen Victoria's palace?" asked the stranger, gravely. "I smell a joke——"

"'Tis Lowmoor gaol."

"Oh—Lowmoor gaol! Of course I've heard of Lowmoor gaol. I must get an order to go into it some day——"

"Aye, sir," said Giles Fletcher; "that's fine and easy, to get in. The thing they mostly want is to get out again."

"They may want, then," said Mr. Crow, recovering his social monarchy, which the stranger had disturbed. "Lowmoor gaol is the strongest, I'm told by them that's been in 'em all, the strongest, sir, in the whole world. There's none that comes near. There's been but two escapes out o' Lowmoor ever since 'twas first a gaol."

"Indeed?" asked the stranger, carelessly.

"And one of 'em wasn't much of an escape, after all—'twas a man that was picked up next morning under Furnace Point, where you'll see the very spot, if you goes there, to this day. I were a little chap then; but my father saw the man, and there wasn't a whole piece of him left more than would fill a thimble."

"That was out of the frying-pan into the fire, eh? And the other man," asked the stranger. "What became of *him?*"

"Ah, sir, but if anybody could answer that, he'd have a hundred pound this very day. Some say he went over Furnace Point too, but if he had, he'd have been found—leastwise, some of him. I had a look after him my own self, along with young Squire Hargrave of Windgates, that was after him like a red hot

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needle. He was out quarrying with the other gaol-birds, that man was, and all of a sudden he was gone. They fired the gun, and all the country was up and after him—Silver Moldwarp and all, that could always find whatever he pleased; p'raps he didn't please—leastwise, he didn't find."

"What was the gentleman's name," asked the stranger, refilling and lighting his pipe, "who was so hot on catching a poor devil who did what any man would do?"

"Young Squire Hargrave, of Windgate. But what any man would do? No, sir; not any man. An honest man what's sent to gaol—there he'd stay. Speaking as clerk of this parish, a man's got to do his duty in that state of life whereto he's called. We might every one have been murdered, for aught we could tell; and no man's got a right to fight a whole parish because he don't like what comes of his own misdeeds. Ah, that was a terrible time—we don't have no more times like that now. We'll never see the likes of 'em again."

"Ah, Mr. Crow," said Giles Fletcher, rubbing his hands gently and slowly, as if he were caressing exciting memories, "times, as you say. 'Twas the very next day Squire Fane's niece suicised herself——"

"Your memory aren't quite right there, Giles," interrupted Mr. Crow. "Nobody knows the ins and outs o' that but me. 'Twasn't the very next day—'twas two days. And 'twas no more suicide than you be. But 'tisn't best to talk too much o' that, with the house just sold. Best let bygones be bygones, say I."

The rector's groom pricked up his ears, for an opportunity seemed to present itself for satisfying curiosity without losing dignity.

"We're all friends here, Mr. Crow," said he, "and if so be this gentleman likes to know what *we* know——"

"I should very much like to know," said the stranger. "Your conversation, and your opinions, interest me, Mr. Crow, more than anything for a long time."

"I quite believe *that*, sir," said Mr. Crow, ignoring the groom. When a man's been parish clerk of Crossmarsh from before Parson Pitcairn's time, 'tis his own fault if he don't know something o' most things. If a man don't know Crossmarsh, he don't know all England: but if a man do know Crossmarsh, he do know Crossmarsh; and so he knows what t'other chaps don't know."

The stranger waited. Mr. Crow, having seen that everybody's attention, coughed, drank, and began; and there were but two in the company, the stranger and the groom, who had heard it less often than five hundred times.

"We used to think there was some'at uncommon about Squire Fane's maggot for picking up pebbles and such like things. He groped about for what you'd call rubbish—lumps o' chalk, and snail shells, and lobster claws. And he wasn't content with what

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lay a'top o' the ground. If you come, sir, from Lowmoor straight over the downs, you passed by a bit of a hillock, called Pix Knoll. Squire Fane cut through it crossways, end to end and twice athwart; and he'd go poking in and out as if he was a coney in a gold mine. Now I leave you to guess, sir, what a gentleman should want with a lot of lumps o' chalk out o' Pix Knoll. We didn't think so much of it at first—at least the others didn't, though I always had my own thinkings. One day I spoke to Parson Pitcairn. 'Oh, the Squire's a great scholar,' says he, 'and he's after the treasures of the Ancient Britons'—those were his very words. But he didn't seem to find 'em. So all of a sudden there comes into his service, from the Lord knows where——"

"Aye, Silver Moldwarp!" interrupted Mr. Fletcher.

"I say, from the Lord knows where—a man without his like, neither here, nor there, nor nowhere all the country round. They were good times, but I don't care to talk too much of 'em late at night: and of how we used to make merry with a man that mightn't ha' been a man at all. After all, sir,"—he looked severely at the groom—"fun and good company's all very fine, but the soul comes first: and you may talk of your hotels and your railroads, but when I say the good days be gone for Crossmarsh, I mean more as goes to the ear. Silver Moldwarp—that was the chap's name. There wasn't a mortal thing he couldn't do. He could fiddle, and he could whistle, and he could sing. Aye, Giles, *sing*. But he could do things nobody could believe, if I was put on oath, except Giles Fletcher, because he knows of his own eyes. I've seen him turn a boiled egg into a live mouse, and pull forty fathom of blue ribbon through his mouth out of his own inside. I've heard him talk queer talk with a spirit that was up the chimney, and make one quart pot dance while another quart pot sang a song. I've seen him make a table dance, too; and conjure the money out o' my pocket into his own . . . and things I wouldn't dare tell to none but Giles Fletcher, that knows. We used to laugh, for he was a jolly chap at 'Feathers:' but he lived all alone, and all his work was to help Squire Fane grubbing in Pix Knoll. And when you gets together a great treasure-seeking scholar and a devil like Silver Moldwarp, come express to help him from Lord knows where—well, sir, it seems to me as how there you are."

"A wizard and his familiar," said the stranger. "I see."

"Anyhow, they was always too familiar to please me, though I was young and giddy then, and used to go to the 'Feathers' more than, maybe, I ought to ha' done. Well, sir, this Squire Fane had two young nieces, as nice children as you'd wish to see. And they was Miss Rosamond and Miss Sophia, young man," he added, severely to the groom.

"Well—to be sure!"

"Young Fletcher, up at Fane's cottage, used to tell me there

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was a sort of a empty lumber room where nobody never dared to go——"

"The magic chamber?" asked the stranger.

"Eh, sir? You seem uncommon knowing about them sort o' thing. Where nobody never dared to go—But one night Miss Rosamond, being a female, and therefore curious by nature: 'twas midnight, maybe—she, I say, went into that there very room. Think o' that, now—into that very room after dark: and she but a female girl!"

He paused for drink, and for the enjoyment of the indrawn sigh of anticipation that thrilled the room.

"Ah! And she saw——?" said the stranger.

"God alone He knows—if He knows!" answered Mr. Crow, "for never was that young creature seen, herself, again!"

"Carried off by the devil?"

"Don't ask *me*, sir. I only tell you this—*Silver Moldwarp vanished too.*"

"I'm glad I came to Crossmarsh," said the stranger. "That's the best original story of the black art I ever heard—it leaves such a lot to the fancy. Yes—the old wizard, the magic chamber, the innocent girl, the fatal curiosity, and the devil, half comic, half tragic, like all the best specimens, to fly away with her through the midnight air. But what became of the wizard uncle? And weren't there two girls?"

"After that, sir, Squire Fane threw all his gettings out o' Pix Knoll into the sea, 'twas may be chalk, or may be gold; and then he with Miss Sophia went to foreign parts away, and died in London town. And now the cottage is sold; and she's a bold woman, say I, that's bought a house to live in where there's been such-like goings on."

"Then has nobody lived in that house all this time? Is it empty at this moment—Now?" asked the stranger, with an air of such absolute indifference that a quicker brain than was used at Crossmarsh must have seen that it was too complete to be sincere.

"Not a soul, sir. Leastways not a body I should say. Bless you, sir, the folk hereabout are that coward they won't go by the place after sundown. Of course I would, if I had occasion—only it don't happen to lay my road home."

"Ghosties and bogles!" broke in the sceptic in the corner. "Not a bit of 'em. There's no such things."

"And who said there was?" asked Mr. Crow. "But p'r'aps you don't believe Miss Rosamond was spirited away——"

"She jumped over the cliff," answered the sceptic.

"P'r'aps you saw her jump?" asked Mr. Crow. "And p'r'aps she told you why? And p'r'aps, as you're so bold, shepherd——look here, if you'll go and sleep to-night in that cottage, I'll stand you a gallon; and then we'll know if there's ghosts or nay."

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"No, no!" said the sceptic. "'Tis *you* ought to try that;" and he looked round, with a grin, for a laugh, but none came. It was getting late, and the subject growing somewhat serious for the hour. At Crossmarsh the people prefer talking of ghosts by honest day.

"And so I would," said Mr. Crow, stoutly, "and for no better than a quart, only I'm a married man, and my home lies t'other road. And what's more, a new shepherd's easy got; but as a public officer I've got to think of the parish. No, shepherd, 'tis you said going into that room meant no more than suicide; so 'tis you ought to see."

"There is such things as a haunted house," said the groom. "There was one near my last place, where an old man without a head and fiery eyes used to slide down the bannisters every first Tuesday in the month at twelve; and I've heard tell of another, where a big black dog used to howl in the scullery when anything was to happen, and when they used to look for him there was nothing to be seen. And there was yet another where a skeleton used to jump out on the maids from behind the haystacks, till they didn't dare to go by. P'r'aps the new lady that's took the cottage will keep her servants, but they'll have to be plucked ones, and their wages 'll have to be high. What'd you take to sleep in that there room, Mr. Fletcher, where the poor young lady went into and never came out again?"

"Take!" said Mr. Fletcher. "There's none of your common ghosts in Crossmarsh, mind that, young man; but I'd like to see the man that would take five hundred pounds to sleep a night all alone by himself in Squire Fane's black room."

"Nevertheless," said the stranger, who had not spoken for so long that his presence had become almost forgotten, "nevertheless, gentlemen, that man will have to be found. I have never seen a ghost, and I should like to have a talk with one of all things. I want to get at the bottom of all this. I want to know what the wizard conjured out of lumps of chalk and lobsters' claws. I want to know whether he really sold his soul to what's-his-name—Silver Moldwarp, and how it was done. You see, I weigh near twelve stone; I'm not so easy to fly off with through the floor, or the ceiling, as if I were a slip of a girl. Moreover, I am a bachelor, and I am not a parish clerk, so that my loss would not amount to a parochial or even to a domestic misfortune. In short, I will spend to-night in the ghost-chamber, and I'll meet you all here to-morrow and tell you what I've seen. Of course, if I don't come—well, gentlemen, you'll understand that I shall be elsewhere."

It was certainly a chance in a thousand for a man who wished to have the run of a house while it was empty, and which he had no reasonable excuse for entering and searching. For had he advanced the true one, that he was searching for an alleged will,

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it would not be long before he would be considerably nearer to Lowmoor again than Crossmarsh was, while a man like Rackstraw, as the pretended Queen's fellow conspirator and employer, would at once be put on the scent of such a search, and, being once put thereon, would take very efficient care that no will should ever be found. Everything, indeed, depended on working with the most absolute secrecy, and with so much suddenness that no sort of risk could possibly be run. He could not go to the house and say, "I am a stranger from America, but I have reason to believe that an important document belonging to myself is hidden in this house with which I have never had anything to do, and why I think so I cannot tell." Such an application as that would assuredly have to be decided upon by Rackstraw—and it was not likely that the same man would escape twice from Lowmoor gaol. Nor, if he could, would the all-important document remain open for finding. He had come to Crossmarsh in search of a plan of undisturbed entry, and had lighted upon an absolutely ideal plan. A house empty and haunted, at a ghost-hunter's sole disposal for a whole night—why it was almost as good as having bought the place, and in some ways even better still.

He certainly had ample time for thinking things out during the startled silence that followed his offer to beard the very devil in his den.

It may be that the fathers of the parish senate were distracted with conflicting emotions, and that there was some charitable unwillingness, perhaps sense of shame, at letting a stranger expose himself to the mysterious perils of the invisible world. But his calmness was even more impressive than his courage; he was certainly sober and apparently sane. And, after all, Crossmarsh was not so very different from Laxham, Windgate, and the rest of the world so far as human nature was concerned. When a man deliberately throws himself into a whirlpool, horrified crowds gather from far and near, not to forcibly restrain him from his purpose, but to look on. If he succeeds he is a hero; if not—well, he gives people something far more delightful than heroism to talk about to their grandchildren. If this venturesome stranger emerged from his adventure safe and sound, the old story of the place would still be just as good as new. If something happened, the old story would be a hundred times better than new. But if the stranger vanished from mortal sight, even as poor Miss Fane —why then an ineffable horror would give Crossmarsh a glory of wonder and awe, and enable every man there present to boast, to his dying day, "I seed the chap just afore he went in."

"Well, sir," said Mr. Fletcher, licking his lips as if they had a pleasant flavour, "you be a good plucked 'un—that you be!"

"Oh, it's nothing," said Laurence, "I'm only afraid, with our friend in the corner, that there'll be nothing to see. Ghosts are shy birds, except when they're not wanted. Somebody, I daresay, will

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lend me a lantern; and I've got a pipe, and a flask, and I'm used to sleeping rough out West, so I shall do very well. The only question is, how am I to get in and find the room?"

"You'd better not go, sir," said Mr. Snow. "But, of course, if you will—why, there's nought more to say. About getting in, you can do that, for I keep the house-key, leastwise 'tis at my house nigh the church, not a quarter of a mile off here. About the room, you go straight through the hall, and up the stairs straight in front of you, and then along the landing, that looks over into the hall, to your left till you comes to the end, and then down three steps and along a long passage to your right—a main long passage; then you gets into the back part o' the house, but you never turn; and when you have got through a old loft with a lean-to, there's the door afore your very nose. A child couldn't miss the way."

"No; that's plain enough. First landing, left as far as you can, right as far as you can: room. Now, gentlemen, drink me good luck and a lively ghost, and I'll go, for it strikes me the witching hour isn't far away."

"A minute, sir, if you please!" said Mr. Crow, for the rest were falling into somewhat ghoulish silence, save the groom, who whistled to show that he, as a man of the world, was not to be impressed with a mere Crossmarsh mystery. "If anything *should* happen, sir—not that 'tis likely, nor I hope it won't—wouldn't it be best to leave your name and where you belong to, so as your friends might know?"

"I'd rather not," said Laurence, lightly. "If your Silver Moldwarp carries me off, it shall be name and all. Think what it will be to say, 'There wasn't so much as his name left of him.' As for friends—perhaps if I had friends I shouldn't go. It's having wives, and children, and comrades, that keeps back brave fellows like you."

"That's it, sir!" said Mr. Fletcher. "'Tisn't that a man's afraid."

"No, no. Of course not. Good night, gentlemen—good bye, in case I shouldn't see you again. Now, Mr. Crow."

"I wouldn't be in that there chap's boots," said Mr. Fletcher, "not for all the money in London town, and Laxham beside."

And none said him nay.

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Chapter III.

It's hame again, and hame again,
And hame! sae lilted she:
But a' was lane and a' was gane
Whaur the kindly licht suld be:

And a' was leer and a' was bare
Of a' she fared to see:
Sae it's hame nae mair, and name nae mair,
And never mair for me.

"Sophy," said Rosamond, "I am going away from London—really, this time. So please find out all about the trains."

"Oh, madam! You are going home?"

"Yes--Home."

"Then—you will not want me any more?"

"Not want you, child? Why, I thought it was settled you had transferred your allegiance from Queen Victoria to Queen Ngahoung. Are you not coming with me even to the other side of the world? And not want you when I am only going a few miles for a day!"

"Yes: you are my Queen!" said Sophy. "I only want to serve you till I die. But you might not want me in your own country, where everything is so beautiful and so happy—and you said you are going home."

"Well—isn't one's house one's home? I've been buying an English house, you know, where I can escape from the smoke to the sea till I go really home. And, dear—but don't tell—I think I want to get a little away from Dr. Rackstraw too. Of course he is a wonderfully clever man, and explains to me all about the parliament, and the church, and the peerage, and politics, and commerce—particularly commerce—in the clearest way, so that I really think sometimes I'm beginning to understand them. The only thing I can't make out is how it is we get on so well without them in Apahu, and how you seem to get on so badly with them here. I suppose it's a shocking thing to say, dear, but I don't like civilisation and enlightenment—but then I'm only a savage—and, Sophy, don't breathe it to Dr. Rackstraw: I shall never be anything more. I shall take just one thing back to Apahu, and that's *you*. Now find out all about the trains to a place called Laxham, like a clever girl as you are."

"Laxham!" Sophy exclaimed. But Rosamond's mind was busied with lands beyond Laxham, and had no reason for noticing any peculiarity in Sophy's tone. However, the word had put an additional seal on the latter's lips. If she were going back for a little while into her own country, it should be simply as Senhora Miranda's companion—not as that poor Miss Fane who had to sell Crossmarsh because her uncle had robbed her of her last

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penny for the sake of his own whims. She was grateful to Dr. Rackstraw for having turned her into Miss Grey, and to fortune for not having let her visit her own country since she was a little child, so that nobody could recognise her as the Miss Fane whose lands were being sold. She had not a tie left to link her with her past, and intended to have none for evermore.

A good deal to her surprise, and a little to her disappointment, nothing was seen of her friend and patron before they started for Laxham. Indeed, though Sophy had always found the grace and dignity of her mistress a good deal mixed with a sudden and sometimes unintelligible impulse, as was natural enough in a lady from the South Seas, the Senhora had never appeared downright capricious until now. The purchase of this house must have been a strangely sudden caprice: her departure for it seemed like the rush of a child upon a new toy: and she would not take a single servant with her, not even her Swiss courier. The inexperienced traveller, utterly unversed in railway complexities, threw off her leading strings and corks, and cast herself upon the world with none but Sophy to counsel and protect her. However, Sophy had been a wanderer in the labyrinth of civilised travel all her life, and to avoid arriving at Laxham was not an easy thing.

Here they dined: and here Sophy expected they would stay for the night. But a demon of unrest appeared to have seized upon Her Majesty the Queen. A carriage with a pair of horses was ordered, and the travellers, with their very moderate amount of luggage, were once more upon the road. It was already the latest shade of twilight, and Sophy knew not whither they were bound.

"Is your new house far from here?" she asked.

"Yes—no—" said her mistress, who had fallen into a silent reverie, and appeared to be gazing farther than eyes can see. "No doubt," thought Sophy, "she is wearied out with being an English lady—and no wonder. I wish all this time were over, and that we were gone. I wish we were in that wonderful island, where people dream that they are happy—and never wake from their dreams."

Presently the road lay over the chalk downs. All at once Sophy felt one of her hands clutched by both the Queen's—and these were fevered and trembling. "Oh, Sophy," she exclaimed, throwing herself back, and drawing a full breath—"the sea—the sea!"

Sophy was not an imaginative person, and could not see what was not to be seen. Moreover, her thoughts were exceedingly far away. But her mistress's fevered clutch and excited manner called her back from her own thoughts half alarmed. She could almost hear the Queen's heart beat: she could see her bosom heave: she felt her trembling.

"What is the matter, madam?" she asked, growing really frightened. "Are you ill?"

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"No, no. Don't speak to me—don't think of me: that's all." She spoke almost sharply—she, who had been so unfailingly and generously kind. But she grew somewhat calmer: and Sophy wondered if she knew that she had heard or answered a word.

At last they stopped at a cottage by the roadside, with a light burning in the window. The driver tapped with the butt of his whip at the door, and brought out an exceedingly respectable old lady, who curtseyed at the carriage window.

"Are you Mrs. Crowe?" asked Rosamond, still speaking as if she were but half awake from a dream. "I am Madame Miranda, who have bought the house that used to belong to Mr. Fane, and the lawyer at Laxham told me I should be able to get the key from you. Here is his card."

"*Our* house—Crossmarsh!" cried Sophy to herself, and crouching back into her corner of the carriage as if there were need to hide on a dark night from an old woman who had not seen her since she was a little child. She was utterly scared by the coincidence; and yet what could there be more in it than that a house wanted a purchaser, and a purchaser a house, at one and the same time? Every purchase is a coincidence in that way. But at the moment Sophy did not know what to think; still less what to say or do.

"*You're* the lady that bought the cottage!" exclaimed Mrs. Crowe. "Why you don't ever mean to say you're going in now? News come from Laxham market that 'tis sold: but to think of your coming down all at once, so soon! Why, ma'am, the house hasn't been slep in since Squire Fane he went away. To be sure I've got the key——"

"I suppose it is sudden, but never mind," said Rosamond, in a less dreamy tone. "But my friend and I have brought down all we shall want for a night, and we must see about making things comfortable to-morrow. We were in a hurry to get home, and we like roughing it, and we hate inns."

In country places it is not good form to express surprise: but Mrs. Crowe looked decidedly grave.

"I think you'd best not go to the cottage to-night, ladies," said she. "'Tis sure to be terrible uncomfortable, and empty, and cold; and, begging your ladyship's pardon, of course 'tis all nonsense, 'but there's tales."

"Tales?" asked Rosamond.

"You haven't heard, ma'am? Ah, then, 'tis no business of mine: and 'tis all nonsense—there aren't no ghosties nowadays."

"And if there were," smiled the purchaser of that worst of all bad bargains, a haunted house, "we shall get on very comfortably with them, I dare say—though of course now they'll have to go: but all the same it seems a little hard to disturb old tenants, Mrs. Crowe. I'll take the key now, and you shall hear from me pretty early to-morrow——"

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"Yes, madam: 'tis for you to do as you please, to be sure—but all the same—Why, bless my heart alive! wherever *is* the key?"

Rosamond leaned back patiently while the search was being made. Sophy was still trying to reconcile herself to the complication of being thus brought back, under a changed name and as a stranger, by a stranger to her own old home. Sentiment had little or nothing to do with her state of mind, for in truth her only desire had been to cut herself away from her past altogether, and never to have to do with the world that held Horace Derwent again. Her childhood at Crossmarsh had ended in pain and trouble, her after-life in ruin, and the death of her one dream had crowned it all, making her believe the whole world, save Senhora Miranda and Dr. Rackstraw, an abyss of fickleness, falsehood, and greed.

The key could not be found. "I *know* I put it somewhere," said Mrs. Crowe, "and have kep it somewhere: and I could have laid my life 'twas on that nail. But it can't be gone, and to-morrow I'll hunt high and low. 'Tis a sort of a providence, ma'am. They can make shift at the 'Feathers,' I dare say—'twill be better than you'd have found at the cottage."

"There used—" began Rosamond, "there ought, I mean, to be a key of the servants' door, at the side."

For a moment Mrs. Crowe did look surprised, and vexed besides. "Oh yes, ma'am, I've got *that* key. But 'tis hardly fitting a lady should go into her house after dark, by a back door, and no beds aired——"

"I prefer it," said Rosamond, in her royal manner. "I'll take that key now. Good-night, and thank you, Mrs. Crowe."

When Mr. Crowe came home, rather late, for the "Feathers," there was news for him indeed. His wife had been good enough to wait up for him, so that he might have the very earliest word—"Peter, they're come!"

"Come?"

"Aye, Peter: Squire Fane's is sold to two young women, with their bonnets choke full of bees——"

"I know: Giles Fletcher heard all that at Laxham market. Ah, *they* won't stop here long."

"But you don't know they're in *now*, by the back door! They come here for the main key—and I couldn't find it, high nor low—from Laxham, in a fly and pair, baggage and all."

Mr. Crowe glared aghast. For his nerves had been considerably fluttered by his own ghost story, and the result of his return to the "Feathers" had by no means cleared his brain. The consequences of having betrayed his trust as key-keeper might be disagreeable unless he took precautions to hide his past transaction; and he had not the least intention of going to a houseful of bogeys, bogey-hunters, and other strange creatures to see if anything was wrong. And so, with plenty of beer in his brains, he did what

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every blockhead is almost sure to think wise—he said nothing to his wife about what had become of the missing key. For he was well up in proverbs like, "You may tell who's new married by his telling his wife news:" and "Silence is the hedge of wisdom," as some exceptionally long-eared saw-coiner used to say.

But Rosamond knew what she was about exceedingly well. It is true she had no practical purpose in view: all she felt was that there was nothing left her at the end of a vain search but to go back to Apahu, and there to live and die alone—only first she must see the old sights, and hear the old sounds, and bid good-bye to the ghosts of old times. Moreover she must keep the tomb of her life in her own hands: she loved it too well to let it pass to strangers, and there was always the chance of its proving something more than a tomb so long as it remained hers. Sophy, if living, would surely come back a pilgrim to the old home some day, even as she was coming back now, and before she left England for the land which had married her she could take steps to ensure that such a pilgrimage should not be made in vain. The hurry of her flight from London had been deliberate: she desired to throw off her queendom, and not to have the sacred places of her heart intruded upon and dissected by her philosopher and friend. Dr. Rackstraw would, of course, in due time recover his pupil, and she would in due time need again his help and his council: but not now. And she entered her own house, her Mecca, like a thief in the night not out of impatient caprice but because it was her heart's desire to come unseen and to find as little unchanged as could be found. A hint of the new mistress coming, she thought, and it would be somebody's business to sweep, and garnish, and drive out the very ghosts whom she was coming to see: and she would have to face all the stares in the parish instead of creeping in silent and unknown.

Dumb must be the pen and deaf the ear that have failed to tell and to gather what this home-coming meant to Rosamond, Queen of Apahu. Many times, and in many ways, has her strange story been told—the story of a home-bred English girl carried off in the simplest way and yet as if in an Arab's dream, and at once transformed into the Queen of an unknown land. And now, after many years, with her mind full grown, her soul enlarged, but with her heart of hearts unchanged, she was coming back to her cradle wherefrom all but her heart had died. She had thought to find all as she had left it—uncle Æneas groping for his fossils; Sophy running about like a wild bird—just because the same Rosamond was coming back again: and she, the dead was coming back to life, and only the living had died.

It was a ghastly business, after all, when the side-door had been opened, the luggage carried in by the driver, and the fly discharged. As to reasonable comforts, there was no lack of them, for she had

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made Sophy pack almost as if for a campaign. But these things were of no moment, seeing that she had only thought of them for her companion's sake. She passed into the square hall, holding her lighted lamp, Sophy following. Not a chair had been disturbed. Sophy regarded her with a sort of awe, she was so silent, and her eyes were so full of the light of April. The younger girl was on the very edge of taking the Queen into her confidence, but did not dare.

Imagine the feelings of a ghost permitted to return, after many years, from the grave, with the wisdom of death in its soul, to find all changed. Or rather, a woman made a child again without losing her womanhood, to find that even childhood also is dust and vanity. Now she seemed to hear her uncle calling: now Oswald's mare upon the drive: now Sophy bounding down the stairs. Now again she was only conscious of all the emptiness and the end, and her home-sickness turned into a longing for the blue skies and human sunshine of Apahu.

"Come in here," she said, opening the library door. That room was empty indeed. "We will make this our parlour for to-night," said she. "And now we must look for night quarters. Let us go upstairs. We will make some tea with the spirit-lamp, and— —"

Her eyes caught sight of something on the floor. It was a sharpened flint, labelled, "Found by Moldwarp," with the date, "in Pix Knoll."

She gazed at it in so long a trance that Sophy knew not what to do. "Leave me," she began to sob. "Don't you hear me? For God's sake leave me alone."

A queen must be obeyed. Sophy, frightened and miserable in that ghastly house, alone with this woman, who seemed falling back into the savage more and more every hour, crept back into the hall, but left the door ajar. The heathen queen seemed to have found a fetish in the pointed stone: for she was on her knees with it in her hands.

"Oh, if something would speak to me,—if I could only hear a voice!" Sophy heard her cry.

"I am not myself to-night," she said, after they had looked into one or two of the upstair rooms. "I suppose civilisation is telling on my nerves. You mustn't mind me to-night, dear. To-morrow I will go down to the sea, and swim my nerves and my follies away. We will sleep here. Come, let us make up our beds. These couches and our blankets will do for to-night. We don't have feather beds in my country, and you must learn our ways."

The room she had chosen was that which had been her own; and it was even curiously little changed. Mrs. Crowe, who had the care-taking, evidently was of strongly Conservative views, and had taken no liberty with the place as it had been left by the

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Fanes. It may be remembered that the room was double, so she bade Sophy take the second and inner room. Sophy would rather not have left her mistress even to the extent of having an open door between them: but the Queen always made a point of sleeping alone.

"If you wake and chance to hear me moving about, or miss me," said the Queen, "never mind. I don't feel much like sleeping; and I may be inclined to explore."

"Oh," cried Sophy, "pray don't go wandering about this—this strange house, all alone! Do wake me, if I'm asleep, and take me with you, if you do."

"Go to sleep, my child," said Rosamond, "you must be dead tired. Now kiss me—and if you wake before morning, you will have disobeyed your Queen."

It need not be said that Sophy was tired—very tired: with travelling, with thinking, with grieving, with fearing, with wondering. Her bed was anything but luxury, and her whole situation was trying and exciting to the nerves: but, after all, Sophy's nerves and troubles were mostly apt to let themselves out in one good cry. Her disillusion about Horace Derwent was the only trouble over which she had never cried. That had gone deep: but mere sentiment was as healthily unknown to the grown girl as it had been to the child. Her tears floated her into slumber very soon.

Rosamond was fully as restless as she expected to be. She closed the door between Miss Grey's room and her own, placed the lighted lamp in a dark corner, threw up her window, and looked out to sea. The water had been like glass when she last saw it: now, even through the dark, she could see the white horses tossing their manes. What was she getting out of this visit, after all? Well, she would have been miserable if she had not come—it had at any rate the advantages of exorcism. She would never wish to set eyes on it again. She had come there, and freed herself of the hunger: and now, since all was lost and dead in her old home she would be able, with a freer mind and an emptier heart, to devote herself to her new.

But, meanwhile, she must go through it all. Without the least trembling of the nerves, for she was in far too exalted a mood, she carried her lamp along the gallery over the hall, and along the white-washed passage, until she reached the door of her bower and citadel of old time. Surely she had been there but yesterday—not full ten years ago. For her, at last, was absolutely no change: this back part of the old farm-house had always been empty, deserted, and her own.

She almost expected to see her bundle of romance lying upon the table: but that had gone. So also had the heap of straw from which her real romance had appeared in living form. She went to where it had been—the only spot on the floor which she had never seen.

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If she had only seen that spot, how the charm of her bower would have been multiplied; for, as is not unusual in old lofts and lumber rooms of farm-houses on the west coast (the farmers who made them, and sometimes the preventive service, knew why) there was a trap-door that was not hard to pull open: and not only a trap, but a half-ladder, half staircase, below.

In a word, the nature of the apparition that terrified the child out of her wits stood revealed: and all her history had hung upon a straw . . . . But that was an old story now, and courage had grown—perhaps for the moment morbidly high. She turned the trap well back upon its rusty hinges, and carried her lamp a few steps down. Who of the sex of Eve and of Bluebeard's wife would not have done the same—or of Adam's either? So it was thus that the man had hidden himself who had brought her fate, and whose voice had found her again and summoned her after ten years. The mystery had been exposed thus far: but she shuddered at the remembrance of its misery—perhaps of its recurrence, unless she hastened back to what seemed the only spot on earth where these mysteries and miseries were alike unknown.

It seemed strange that there should have been a nook or corner of the cottage that she, and still stranger that Sophy, had never found out in their exhaustive explorations. The steps led down, through an atmosphere of close air and choking dust, into a bare room exceedingly like the one she had left above ground, though not quite so large. What a find, what a castle, what a secret bower it would have made for her once upon a time! She would explore no further now, although the discovery of so much promised so much more. Besides, she was half choked and stifled, and new things were not what she had come to see.

The room must have been used for some purpose or other by former generations of Fanes, or whoever were there before them, for there was an old three-legged stool there, and some hoop-staves, and similar odds and ends. At present, however, it was given over to the spiders, for whom it must have been a veritable Apahu. There were plenty of mouseholes; and a corner cupboard with broken doors. Before leaving the place she looked into this, and stood on the three-legged stool to look higher: and on the top shelf she found a folded paper, covered with dust, but showing no special signs of age. She opened, it seemed to be some sort of law paper, and the first words were, "This is the last will." It was not likely to concern herself; but it must needs, she supposed, concern somebody; and when she was a child she had read plenty of stories about the curious places where wills are found—after all, remembering these stories, a cupboard in a hiding hole in an old farm house was just the very place to find somebody's will.

"Derwent!" thought she, looking at the names. "I don't remember any Derwents about here—or any Derwents except

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those people that Dr. Rackstraw knows. I had better send it to him; and he'll know what it is, and what to do."

She placed the paper in her dress and returned up the stair-ladder. It was a relief to close the trap again, and to breathe less stagnant air.

Hitherto her nerves had been strangely calm, as calm as if she were re-visiting a grave after many years. But, whether the calm was false, or whether the last impressions she had of her bower crowded back upon her in the rush of a moment, she was seized with a panic the like of which she had never known. It seemed to her as if a human form were in the darkness of the door—as if with her the shadow of her life had returned to the same spot where it had first been thrown between her and the sunshine of her days. Yes, the shadow was now all that was left to come. She did not stop to reason. She, Queen as she was, flung her lamp into a corner, and, in the crush and darkness, flew through the door, slammed it behind her, turned the key twice in the lock, and then sped at double pace till she was at her bed-room window, again drinking the wind from the sea.

"It is the last time!" she panted. "Never while I live will I open that horrible door again!"

Chapter IV.

Cobbler.—Of your good learning, unriddle me this master:—

Sworn to Sue, and plight to Prue,
Robin's false, and Robin's true.

Doctor.—Nay, fellow: never was he true wight that is forsworn.

Cobbler.—Then must I e'en resolve mine own maximum: e'en thus:—

If Sue were Sue, and now is Prue,
Unforsworn he were not true;
Since Prue is Prue and was not she,
Being true swain, most false is he.

Oswald Hargrave was necessarily aware of the conveyance of Crossmarsh to Senhora Miranda. He was vexed; though, of course, he had no business reason for being so. On the contrary, everything had gone miraculously well and smoothly. Of course, Sophy would not be a penny the richer for the sale, which would be swallowed up by the payment of debts and mortgages: but she would be saved having to pay heavy annual interest, and be free from a legion of responsibilities. Indeed, to say that she would not be a penny the richer is to speak too conventionally: for the Senhora had been in much too great a hurry to bargain, and had payed what the amazed lawyers had chosen to ask her in the expectation of having their terms beaten down. Moreover she had paid in hard cash, and had asked no questions: so that nobody but herself had a right to come. I

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have abstained, and claim credit for it, for not having detained the proceedings which resulted in the leave of the Court of Chancery to sell an estate in coparcenary on security being given to satisfy the claims of the co-heiress should she ever come to life again. I claim credit, because, in the position of Miss Fane's counsel, the case has given me an infinity of thought and trouble—all to result in these half dozen lines. Oswald found the security by a mortgage on his own farm: nor was he advised to the contrary, seeing that unless the court had been reasonably satisfied of Miss Rosamond's death with issue, leave would have been withheld. As things were, even he, loyal to the possibility of her life as he had been all these years, was bound at last to surrender his dream, so far as she was concerned.

All these things belonged to his talk with the lawyers at Laxham: the whole business was settled, and he had once more to face the fact that he must either quit his search or forthwith force it to an end. Moldwarp and Rackstraw were still his only clues: and he had absolutely no means of forcing their hand. For still through Laurence Derwent lay his only road to Rosamond. The weak and easily-turned—that is to say, all the worshippers of resolution and strength of will—will feel that he ought to have cut through the knot somehow, though they know not how. But such must learn to realise first what it means to love a ghost for ten years. Rosamond had never been his, even in name, he would not know her if she came before his eyes, as he very well knew. He himself was ten years older than he was ten years ago: and the probability of her death grew stronger and stronger, while his hope, which meant his faith, grew weaker day by day. In such a cold fit he could only perceive that Rackstraw meant to be inscrutable, and that Moldwarp was as slippery as a serpent, and would know his purpose besides.

Well—it came to this, that at any rate there was no middle way between beginning life again, or driving on the end. And whichever way he decided, he would leave his own country, where he could neither follow his search nor begin life again. For Sophy he had now done all he could: there was nothing left to bind him to the lives of others. He would see the last of her, and then make his own decision, once for all, and stand by it without further wavering, whatever it might be. It is just the most stubbornly faithful hearts that have the faintest hours, if all the truth could be known.

So, though her business had been carried out for the best, that she should have been brought back to Crossmarsh was odious to him in the extreme. He shared to the full all Mr. Harding's disbelief in the Senhora, and none the less because he had but once seen her, and had never spoken to her; and her connection with Rackstraw only confirmed him in his idea of her as an adventuress—though it can be no ordinary adventuress who buys

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real estate with hard cash, and whose wealth on that occasion was beyond disputing. If Harding was a king of the silver mines, she was an empress of emeralds and rubies. He was afraid of her for Sophy—and yet even in this there was nothing to be done. He could not forget how the girl had fired up at the least suspicion of her friend.

Thus it happened that Rosamond, standing at the library windows and looking out upon the drive, and thinking, not merely dreaming, of her own, her real own people of Apahu, for whom she was answerable to the King of Kings and Queens, was brought back, all in a moment, to the Crossmarsh of old. For, as if it were but yesterday, there was Oswald Hargrave, he and no other, leading his horse past the greenhouse where he had told her to wait for him, the last words of his that she had ever heard; words that she had forgotten the moment they were spoken, but which now came back as if they had been seeds that had taken ten years to grow.

And she had thought he, too, had vanished out of the world, like all else that had belonged to her when she was young .... And would *he* know, perhaps, what had become of Sophy? .... She felt herself turn faint and pale. If he could tell her nothing; if he could only tell her that the child was dead—but then, if he could say, "The child is alive"—Rosamond felt like a prisoner before her judge, before doom is spoken. She left the window and paced the room. "Has he found me out?" she asked herself. "*Can* he have learned I am here?" She did not know whether she hoped or feared. "If he knows me, he knows me—but if he does not; and if Sophy is gone—There must be no chance then; Rosamond Fane must be dead, and I must be for ever what I am. "Have I come for life and death? It is no use praying. What is done is done."

The house, with the help of Mrs. Crowe and of the village carpenter had very soon been put into sufficient living order for two ladies who required for the present only three rooms; for none of the needful furniture had been removed. Sophy had not yet found either the courage or the will to tell her mistress of her own former connection with the house to which she had come as a stranger; and, for that matter there was every reason why she should put off that perfectly useless confession for good and all. She, also, was beginning a new life, and meant to be Miss Fane no more; and besides, it would be a breach of faith to Dr. Rackstraw, and oblige him to make explanations which she knew he wished to avoid. So when Oswald was shown by Mrs. Crowe into the drawing-room where she had been meditating, as became a lady in waiting, on less lofty matters than became the mind of Majesty, she said at once—

"I know what *you* think, Oswald—but I am still to be Miss Grey."

"And for once," said he, "I *don't* think you are wrong. It

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isn't that that troubles me. It is your being with this woman, here at Crossmarsh, at all. Being here—since nobody will remember you—it is as well you should avoid the false position you would be in as Miss Fane."

"Ah—I am so glad you think me right!" said she. "And——"

"We must fall out, Sophy, about no small things. I may not see you for a long, a very long time."

"Yes, Oswald—and I—I am going. To Apahu."

"Apahu?"

"Don't you know? It is the country of my mistress, the Queen."

"Good God, Sophy! But I can't match reason against a witch, and a—Rackstraw: if there be an Apahu, or whatever the name is, anywhere out of the world of dreams: or of frauds. That woman——"

"Hush, Oswald! Here she comes—the Queen."

Sophy rose, and stood in all respect: for she believed with all her heart in her mistress, and in her own office, and publicly indulged in no favourite's liberties.

Oswald was already standing; and he bowed, but under protest; and certainly not to the Queen. Rosamond merely inclined her head, and did not hold out her hand; it was not the custom in her own country. But, for all her cold stateliness, her heart was throbbing, and she was searching him with her eyes.

"He does *not* know me," her own eyes answered her. "And yet he is not changed."

Strange enough, in all conscience, would it have been if the man who had been moving round in the circle of one idea for ten years had known again her who in that time had grown up from a child into a queen, and from a queen into a woman.

Yet she was saddened by his want of knowledge: the woman had not yet grown up to the height of pure reasonableness—nor would, may be, until her time came to grow into something higher still.

As for him, with all his doubts of her, he was far more impressed by her presence than when he merely saw her in the midst of a crowd on the night when Æneas Fane died. He had to harden himself against a certain magic: for he could not feel that she was what he believed her to be.

"I am a neighbour of yours, madame," he said. "My name is Hargrave; I live at a place called Windgate, not many miles away."

"And you have come to call upon your new neighbours?" asked Rosamond. "That is friendly. This is my friend, Miss Grey. . . . Of course, you knew the people who lived here before——"

"The Fanes? Well."

"Of course—being in their house—they interest me," said she. She was so eager to reach her question, and yet so dreading it,

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that she fancied she needed excuses for the most natural curiosity about the traditions of the new home.

"There are so many relics of them about that I almost feel as if—as if I belonged to them. Are you sorry they are gone?"

"They were very dear friends of mine," said he.

"Let me see—I have heard something of them already; they were an old man and two girls. He is dead; and they—what has become of *them?*"

Sophy glanced at him quickly.

There was certainly no reason why he should betray what she chose to make her secret to satisfy the idle curiosity of a stranger.

"I cannot tell you," said he. "The elder is thought dead——"

"Yes—and the younger?"

"I cannot tell."

Sophy's eyes thanked him. And so Rosamond had her answer. So this was friendship: she came back to find that Oswald Hargrave could not tell. "Then neither can I tell," she thought, all cold with a dull pain.

"Perhaps," she asked, "she is thought dead too?"

"She went abroad," said Oswald, "and what has become of her—I have said—none know." That was quite enough truth for one whom Sophy's fate could not concern.

"Or care to know, I suppose," said Rosamond. "That seems to be the way of the world." A queen from the South Seas might speak a little strangely without seeming strange. "So *she* is dead too—for that is all it can mean. How long have these people—these Fanes—been gone?"

"Ever since the elder girl——"

"Died?—Ah, I see now."

It was as if she had seen her sister die. For if Sophy had vanished out of life on that terrible night ten years ago, even so would Rosamond have broken her heart, and have died of love and sorrow.

Nothing on earth could have made her say to Oswald now, "I am Rosamond Fane, come back from the grave." All was lost that she cared for: he knew her not: he was so indifferent that he had even forgotten how and when her sister had died. What would she signify to him, or he to her? It would merely confuse her plans, and roughen her return to Apahu. . . . Let all the past go now: for all had gone.

"It is a strange old house, this that they call a cottage," said she, with a sudden change of manner—bright, but hard, like one of her own gems: and a little bewildering to a man who knew little of women's whims. "I have been groping about all over it, and look what I found. Is it of any use, do you suppose?"

He looked at the paper which she gave him. "Why," said he,

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"it is a will. And Derwent—there have never been any Derwents here. I know some Derwents——" Sophy's heart came into her ears.

"So do I," said Rosamond. "Can it have to do with them?"

"Impossible, I should say," said Oswald. "And of course, if it could, there's no saying whether it's any use to them or no . . . . But wait——." He turned deeply grave. "This *is* of use, I should say. Where was this found?" he asked, with his eyes fixed on the paper in his hand.

"In an old cupboard. Of course it means nothing to me. I thought of sending it to Dr. Rackstraw——"

"Would you trust it to me?" he asked, eagerly. "I know the Derwents—and they *are* the people it concerns."

"Certainly," said Rosamond. "I don't mind who takes charge of it, as long as it is in the right hands. It is very strange, though it should be here. But no. There is nothing in the world that is strange."

That, however, was not Oswald's opinion as, after some further talk that wandered farther and farther away from what was in the hearts from those who made it, he rode back to Laxham. To find further evidence of a connection between Moldwarp and the Derwents, in the former's witness to a very obvious experiment in forging something more ambitious than flint arrow-heads was certainly not strange. That was merely useful; and he would employ it without further delay. What he found strange, and what, all the way to Laxham, and all the way that same night to London ran in his mind, was the woman for whom he had spoken for the first time that day. He, the lover of a dream, felt as if a living woman had thrown him under a spell.

He had come scarcely meaning to see her; or, if seeing her, merely to gain such knowledge of her as might enable him the better to warn and protect Sophy. He found a presence, now soft and eager, now keen and brilliant, that, in its sudden moods startled him into something beyond observant interest, and a voice that seemed to make music in him at once old and new. He had felt this in some measure even at the outset, when she was merely asking questions about the Fanes and showing him the paper she had found. But it was afterwards, when the talk ran upon her own country and her thoughts of England, that he began to comprehend the devotion of Sophy. The truth was that the Queen of Apahu was energetically throwing away the last remnants of Rosamond Fane.

So he who was searching the world for Rosamond found a charm in another woman that he had surely never known in that poor child. His excuse must be that he came to her doubtful of himself and disheartened, and that his heart had lived empty all its life, of all but hopes and memories—and these are sorry food.

(*To be continued.*)

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SOMETHING ABOUT NEW GUINEA.

A GLANCE at the Indian or Malay Archipelago is the revelation of a well-nigh spent and accommodated conflict between Hephaistos and Poseidon. Amongst the marine evidences and memorials of this past strife of the gods is to be reckoned the periodical blanching of the sea between Banda and Australia, which twice a year attracts the epithet of the Milk Sea or the White Water, on account, as has been speciously suggested, of the rising of sulphurous and volcanic exhalations from the tortured bottom of the deep to the agitated surface. The *terra firma* proofs of the chaos from which they have emerged into the status of Edens where the very birds of paradise are native, are to be found in the strange conformation of the islands, whose outlines are as fantastic as those of cloud-land. Celebes, for example, humbly imitated on a smaller scale by Gilolo, writhes on the map through eight degrees of latitude and six of longitude, as if it were the sportive wreathing of a cirrus, or, more tragically, the contortions of a starfish in the agonies of dismemberment. The island of Papua, or New Guinea, again, from its colossal and unshapely head to the armed and rugged extremity of its tail, challenges a respectful resemblance to the remains, if not rather to the ruins, of a megatherium. Its coasts, as represented on the map, are horrid with the names of peaks and promontories running far out into the Pacific, whilst the immense untracked interior is a blank save where a summit or a range is indicated as revealing itself mistily from above the snow-line to the coasting mariner.

New Guinea is, with the exception of Australia, over which it claims a priority in discovery, and with which, when the latter was known as New Holland, it was sometimes thought to be connected, the largest island in the world, thus ranking in size immediately before Madagascar, of which a few glimpses were lately presented in these pages. It lies just under the equator, and between it and the north-east portion of Australia, from which it is separated by Torres Straits. It extends from 30′ to 10°40′ of south latitude, and from 131° to 150°30′ of east longitude. It is of very irregular outline, being deeply indented by several large bays, which form both its north-western and south-eastern extremities into extensive peninsulas, the more compact portion of the island being situated between the 136th and the 144th meridians. It pursues a general south-easterly direction for a distance of 1,500 miles, with a

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breadth varying from thirty to four hundred miles, and an area estimated at nearly 300,000 square miles. It is bounded on the south-west by those portions of the Indian Ocean known as the Banda and Arafura Seas, and in other directions is encompassed by the Pacific.

The crudest law of gravitation would appear sufficient to have compelled attention to an island of such magnificent dimensions. And latterly it has excited a considerable degree of interest throughout our Australian possessions, where rumours of vast tracts of unexplored country, watered by magnificent rivers and abounding in mineral wealth, have been greedily devoured by the restless portion of the inhabitants of "the Fifth Continent," who long to see so fair a land added to the British dependencies. Not to mention the present or prospective relation subsisting or about to subsist between this country and New Guinea, it is sufficient for the purpose of this article to observe that the latter has within the last few years been brought into prominence on account of the numerous exploring expeditions and gold-prospecting parties that have visited it. One of the results of these visits was, not unnaturally, the floating of projects for colonising New Guinea from Australia, combined with contingent schemes for the ultimate annexation of at least the eastern half of the island to the British Crown.

In the face of every incitement to a more intimate acquaintance, however, the statement may even yet be regarded as literally true, that New Guinea is less known to the centres of civilisation on this planet, than any other sublunary region of equal extent. It is a legitimate supposition that its proximity to our Australian colonies, and to the Dutch settlements in the East Indies, its curious Fauna, and its mountains of an almost supreme loftiness, ought to have led, long ago, to a thorough examination of its coasts. Yet the fact remains, as one of the curious incidents in the history of geographical exploration, that it was reserved for Captain Moresby, of H.M.S. *Basilisk*, in the eighth decade of the nineteenth century, to lay down 340 miles of the Papuan coast-line. This stretch of coast, first placed upon the chart by Captain Moresby, had never been visited, and was actually unknown as to its conformation, as shown by the absence of any ascertainable records, up to the year 1873, the date of the first visit of the *Basilisk* to the coast between the wide limits of Heath Island and Huon Gulf. "None of the navigators," as Captain Moresby observes, "who did good service in the South Seas and in other parts of the New Guinea coast, neared the coast-line laid down by the *Basilisk* within these bounds, a fact as singular as it is interesting." This portion of the coast had been avoided by common consent, with a sort of fatality; and even Captain Owen Stanley, R.N., the brother of the late Dean of Westminster, whose valuable survey on the south-east coast is a source of pride to English sea-

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men, never passed round the east end of New Guinea. His work, indeed, lay in the other direction, and is honoured and commemorated in the name of the bold range of mountains which vertebrates the south-eastern peninsula. "It is not on record," to recur to the *ipsissima verba* of Captain Moresby, "that any ship before the *Basilisk* had ever passed from south to north New Guinea without first going some 240 miles to the eastward, to avoid the great Louisiade reefs, which stretch that distance east. She has found a safe ship channel through these reefs, and opened a highway for commerce. The *Basilisk* has placed on the chart more than 140 islands and islets, of which 25 are inhabited; and has added many excellent harbours and safe anchorages to our knowledge." [1]

The discovery of the ship channel through the enormous coral reefs, which had acted as a barrier to keep at a distance all preceding navigators, involves the opening of a new and shorter route from Australia to China, which adds to its other advantages the avoidance of the perils of Torres Straits. The discovery, it has been pleasantly said, may not revolutionise the world's commerce, as did that of a passage round the Cape of Good Hope; but it is nevertheless of the highest importance to the Australian colonies, which must henceforth rank Captain Moresby among their principal benefactors.

From a variety of causes it happened that the people of Ceram, a considerable island to the west of North New Guinea, were for many generations the only strangers who of habit and purpose visited the latter. The Ceramese, subjects and allies of the Dutch East India Company, and for the most part expert sailors, for many years experienced the perfidy and murderous propensities of the Papuans, whom they in turn subdued, not by force of arms, but by a rude diplomacy. Under the appearance of friendship the adventurers from Ceram contracted marriages with the repulsive Papuan women; and the offspring of these unions, who were carefully instructed in the Mahommedan faith, became in fact the rulers of the countrymen of their mothers. The Papuans, notwithstanding the intimate relations thus established between themselves and the Ceramese, could not refrain now and again from attempting to put into practice the truculent designs which they harboured against visitors or strangers in general; but the Ceramese found their security in the affection of their wives, who gave them timely warning of any project which threatened their fortunes or their lives. It was one of the prerogatives of the Ceram *mestizos*, or half-breeds, on whom devolved the petty kingships or chiefdoms of New Guinea, to be, with their wives, the only people to indulge in any kind of dress, which they wore

[1] *New Guinea and Polynesia*, 1876.

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after the manner of Ceram, amongst a population whose nudity was at once shameless and absolute.

This is Dutch testimony of the seventeenth century; and if it seems to bear hard upon the people of New Guinea, it may be said that it is an inconsiderable fraction of the charges which have been brought against them. In 1606, for instance, it is recorded that the captain of the *Duif* discovered the south and west coast of New Guinea, and "found this extensive country, for the greatest part, barren, but in some places inhabited by wild, cruel, black savages, where some of the crew were murdered." In the same year a small pinnace of the Flemings returned to Banda from a voyage of discovery to New Guinea, where, "in sending their men on shore to entreat of trade, there were nine of them killed by the heathens, which are man-eaters, so they were constrained to return, finding no good to be done there." In 1619, "a ship named the *Arms*, of Amsterdam, destined for Banda, drove past this place, and touched at the south coast of New Guinea, where some of the crew were murdered by the natives." In 1623, "the skipper and eight of the crew of the *Arnhem* were treacherously murdered by the natives." In 1636, Commodore Pool, in command of two vessels from Banda, found himself on the west coast of New Guinea, near Vlakken Hoeck, or Flat Point. "The commodore," to quote the narrative of Valentyn, "went ashore with his clerk, Andrew Schiller, and some of the crew. They were scarcely landed, when they were attacked by a large body of the savages. Pool was amongst the first wounded with a zagaye, which brought him to the ground. In falling he cried to his clerk, who still defended himself bravely, to endeavour to retreat; but it was too late, and he fell at his master's side. The savages, seizing Pool's sword, cut these two unfortunate persons to pieces, and carried them into the woods, probably to eat them. Two sailors had the same fate; at least, they never appeared. These savages were negroes with long black hair, in stature much larger than any European, and almost entirely naked; but one who appeared to be their chief, had on his shoulders the skin of some wild beast. Their arms were zagayes and darts, pointed with iron very sharp; some also had bows and arrows."

In Alexander Dalrymple's *Collection concerning Papua*, the *Notes* of Burgomaster Witsen are preserved, which, according to that worshipful gentleman, were "transcribed from the *journals* of those who visited the South Land;" and from the same author a more ordered and elaborate account, which may be said to present the best attainable *conspectus* of Dutch observation and opinion, often presumably prejudiced, as to the island and the people of New Guinea to the latter part of the seventeenth century. This account has a significance which can scarcely attach to any other or later description; for it represents the inhabitants at their least possible remove from their original condition.

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Witsen claims that it was in the year 1678 that the north-western part of New Guinea was for the first time systematically explored, by order of the Dutch East India Company. It was found almost everywhere to be enriched with very fine rivers, lakes, and bays, with mountains of immense height in the interior, showing themselves to the navigator, at a great distance at sea, as if towering above the clouds.

About the north-west parts the natives in general were lean and of the middle size, jet black, not unlike the Malabars, but with the hair of the head shorter, and somewhat curly. Their bloodthirsty nature was in some measure discoverable from "the black pupil of the eyes, glittering some tint of red," and was with great grief many times experienced by the loss of several youths, by them surprised, murdered, carried into the woods, and then devoured. Their weapons were bows of bamboo, with arrows of the same, to the ends of which were fastened sharp-pointed fish-bones, with dangerous barbs; by which, when shot into the body, they could not be extracted without great difficulty. They likewise used lances, made of an extremely heavy wood, which they threw with uncommon dexterity; whilst some of them, who lived near the shore, used a particular kind of sword, sold to them by the people of Ceram, and the hilt of which was tied to their hand by rattan.

Of their manners and religion nothing could be discovered, except that, in many respects, they were more like wild beasts than reasonable human beings. The women were delivered in the fields, or the roads, or wherever they might chance to be taken in labour; and the new-born infant was immediately put into a bag, made of beaten bark, in which they carried their provisions. "The eminent women rub their faces with coals, by which they appear more like devils incarnate than human creatures." A picturesque variety of the same gallant description is to the effect that "the women wear large coral necklaces and girdles; and make their faces so horribly ugly with the black of pounded charcoal that they look more like dirty pigs than like women." "Though it cannot be denied that from circumstances it appears they know, by the law of nature, the existence of a God, by pointing with folded hands towards the heavens; for when landing at any place not frequented by the people of Ceram, they require of their visitors to raise their hands, as they do, cutting them with a sharp bamboo in the arms, and their own sucking mutually the blood out of it, which is their oath, and a promise to do one another no mischief."

"Amongst them," Witsen proceeds, "are found some letters, or characters, written in a sort of red chalk against a rock, on the outside of which rock were still to be seen some skulls, and an image of a man, about half-length, that is, from the head to a little below the shoulders, looking as if put up for an ornament, with a shield and other weapons near it, the meaning of all which may be guessed at, but not ascertained.

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"Their sustenance consists of roots, tree-fruits and herbs, but chiefly of fish, caught by them at low water in holes in the bed of the river, as we, when lying at anchor thereabouts, could distinctly see by the stir and motions of the thousands of little lights which they used. They know very little of cooking or drying their food, but generally devour it raw, except pork, which they eat when it has been a little smoked, and is less than half roasted.

"In about 8° or 9° south latitude, we found a tall, terrible, and disgusting race of people, whose chiefs have the inside of the upper lip slit from the nose downwards, the two parts being kept asunder by what they call a gabbe-gabbe. The two sides of the nose, moreover, are bored through with *sasappen*, or thin awls, which gives their voices a frightful and hollow sound, as if coming out of a deep cellar."[1]

A correspondent of Witsen, writing from Amboyna, agrees in describing the inhabitants of New Guinea as a tall, ugly, and mis-shapen people, not so much by nature as by choice; "for they cut their nostrils asunder, that you may nearly see into their throats, from which it may be conceived what fine faces these must be, after having their promontories demolished in this manner. They are a savage barbarous people, who can on no account be trusted; and so addicted to thieving and murder, that the Ceram Lauers cannot trade with them except at a distance. They lay their goods down upon the beach, being put up in heaps, when the most venturesome amongst the strange traders comes forward and makes it understood by gestures and signs how much he wants for them. Their commerce consists in Tamboxe swords, axes to cut the trees down with, bad cloths, sagoe-bread, rice, and black sugar; but the rice and black sugar must be given beforehand to induce them to trade. No traces of government, order, or religion[2] are discernible among them. They live together like beasts; those upon the island erect houses, and a kind of village, placing their houses commonly upon posts, raised to a considerable height above the ground. On the continent they have slight huts, covered with leaves, like hog-styes; in which lie indiscriminately men, dogs, and hogs, upon the bare sand; otherwise they lie down in any place where they can but find white sand. They mourn more for the loss of a dog or hog than for their mothers. They

[1] *Noord en oost Tartarye*, Amsterdam, 1705.

[2] From information derived from another source, Witsen elsewhere relates that "the heathens of New Guinea and New Holland believe some divinity in the serpents, for which reason they represent them upon their vessels." Further, the imputation of the utter lack of religion is to be qualified by the circumstance of a somewhat diffused reverence for *teraphim*, or crystalline pebbles, which were always worn by their votaries. These pebbles had a small red and a small green stripe, and were about the size of a child's clenched hand; other stones were of a glittering yellow, and seemed as if they had some metal mixed with them. These were found to be objects of worship. Another form assumed by the degraded religiousness or superstition amongst the Papuans was the local belief in the nocturnal meeting of witches.

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bury their dead hogs and dogs, but not their deceased relations, whom they lay down upon high rocks to decay under the rain and sun, till nothing remains but the white bones, which at length they bury when they think proper. Their food consists chiefly of fishes, with which their seas abound, and of yams and plaintains. They have no sagoe-trees, neither do they know how to prepare the bread from them, if they had any. Their arms are hasagays (the assegais of our orthography), clumsy and long arrows, and also a weapon formed from a sort of blue stone or slate, pointed at both ends, having a hole in the middle, in which a stick is put for a handle; with this they attack one another in such a manner that with one stroke the skull is crushed to pieces. The further you go to the south the more savage, tall, and ugly the people are, in particular from Lacca-iha to Oero-goba."

The disposition of the people would seem to have varied in different parts of the country, however, and in the adjacent islands, so that even the lurid records of Dutch intercourse with the natives are not without their relieving amenities. In one place, for instance, a number of prows, managed by numerous crews, welcomed strange vessels with shouts and genial acclamations, carrying several little flags, and rowing three times round the visitors as a token of respect. A handful of earth was also offered as the greatest honour that could be shown to a stranger, who, in accepting such a tribute, was understood to have become invested with the command of the country.

The experience of our own countryman, Captain Dampier, who sighted the northern coast of New Guinea in 1699, but made no landing, is still more idyllic. He believed that he and his crew were probably the first white men who had ever showed themselves to the natives of that part of the country, and his ship attracted the interest of some forty or fifty of their "flying prows." One of these responding to an invitation to approach nearer, ventured to within a ship's length of the vessel and lay still again. "In her were ten men, all naked, and in the midst of them, a grave old man of a pleasant countenance, who had on his head a four-cornered cap, without a crown, but otherwise he was quite naked, as were all the rest of them. This man, by the respect all the rest in the boat showed to him, we guessed to be a king or prince. At their approach to us they sang a song, which continued about a quarter of an hour. We could not understand it, but it was tuned very prettily. When this song was done, they came almost close to our vessel's side and then sung another song. This was begun by the grave old man, and followed by all the rest in the boat; which done, they put themselves in a posture of praying, and made several bows and cringes towards us, after the manner of their country. Then one of the men in the boat, pointing to a wound in his leg, entreated by signs that the strangers should cure it"; probably, as Dampier surmises, looking upon them as something

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more than mortal men. This was tolerably bold, or friendly, or both, on the part of the inhabitants of a country of which Lieutenant Kolff and others have declared that the birds were tamer than the men.[1]

The island now currently known as New Guinea has historically been the object of other approaches besides those of Dutch adventurers. These have been made from all motives or from none, and have been ordered or aimless, desultory or systematic, the result of plan or of accident, of purpose and design, or of misfortune and the caprice of the winds. The priority of its discovery is challenged for both Portuguese and Spaniards; but the probabilities of the case seem to favour the pretensions of the former. It is on record that the Portuguese commanders, Antonio Abreu and Francisco Serram, sighted its coast about the year 1511. And a Portuguese vessel, under the command of Don Jorge de Meneses, whilst on a voyage between Malacca and the Moluccas in 1526, being thrown out of her course, came in sight of the north coast of New Guinea, on which the crew landed and remained for several weeks. They called it Papua, a word which, according to the preferences of philologers, means either "black" or "curly haired"; both of which conditions are exemplified by the natives of the island. In defence of the supposition that the name was given in recognition of the frizzled mop-like heads of its inhabitants, the term Papua is said to be a corruption of the Malay words *pua-pua*, signifying curly or woolly. Another usage points to the word as introduced to indicate verbally the combination which occurs in fact. "The people in all these lands are black," said some distressed mariners who sojourned there in 1537, "and have their hair frizzled, whom the people of the Maluco do call Papuas."

In 1528, the Spanish captain, Alvarez de Saavedra, on his return to Mexico from the Moluccas, coasted for a month along the north of New Guinea, on the shores of which he landed, and on which, although there is no evidence of his having penetrated to any distance into the interior, he bestowed the title of Isla del Oro, from the idea which he formed of its abounding in gold. In 1546, the Spanish navigator, Ynigo Ortez de Retes, sailed in the ship *San Juan* along the northern coast of the island; and believing it to be a newly-discovered land, called it by the name of New Guinea, from the supposed resemblance of its inhabitants to those of the Guinea coast in the West of Africa. There is authority, however, for the statement that it was Saavedra who named the island New Guinea, in 1527, "as being opposite on the globe to Guinea in Africa." In 1606, Luis Vaes de Torres, in the ship *La Almiranta*, sailed three hundred miles along the east coast, and doubled the south-east point, continuing his voyage for some distance along the south, and landing in several places, and of course passing through

[1] *Reize*, Amsterdam, 1828.

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the straits, some ninety miles in width, which somewhat tardily came to bear his name. His description of the natives agrees pretty accurately with the accounts of the Dutch explorers which we have already treated in epitome; whilst the Dutch captains, Schouten and Le Maire, who in 1616 landed on the island to obtain fresh water, bought their first experience of the treacherous and bloodthirsty phase of the Papuan character, by the loss of eighteen of their men, who fell the victims of an unexpected attack. In 1642, Abel Tasman, after sailing round Australia, and thus proving it to be an island, returned by New Guinea, and explored some portion of its coast. Dampier's intercourse with the Papuans, in 1699, to which allusion has been made already, was of the most fugitive order. It was not until the year 1770 that Captain Cook first surveyed the passage through Torres Straits, in his ship the *Endeavour*, and so confirmed the statement of the disconnection of the island of New Guinea from the Australian continent; but on account of the hostility of the natives he did not land. In 1774, Captain Forrest was commissioned by the East India Company to discover if spices were to to be found in the possessions claimed by the Dutch; and in pursuance of this quest, he landed at Dorey, in the northern extremity of New Guinea. Of his transactions with the natives of the shores of the bay, Captain Forrest has left a most minute and interesting account:—"Many Papuan Caffres came on board, and were quite easy and familiar. All of them wore their hair bushed out so much round their heads, that its circumference measured about three feet, and, where least, two and a half. In this they stuck their comb, consisting of four or five long diverging teeth with which they now and then combed their frizzling locks, in a direction perpendicular from their head, as with the design to make it more bulky. They sometimes adorned their hair with feathers. The women had only their left ear pierced, in which they wore small brass rings. The hair of the women was bushed out also, but not quite so much as that of the men."[1]

Subsequent visitors to New Guinea include Captain Edwards, in H.M.S. *Pandora*, in 1791, just previous to the wreck of the vessel on the Barrier Reef; D'Entrecasteaux, 1792; Bampton, in 1793; and Captain Blackwood, of H.M.S. *Fly*, who in 1845 made a survey in the neighbourhood of the Papuan Gulf, terminating east of Aird's River, the details of which are narrated in a very interesting manner by Mr. Jukes, the naturalist to the expedition.[2] The most important results, however, up to the time of their achievement, were those realised from the expedition under the command of the late Captain Owen Stanley, of H.M.S. *Rattlesnake*, which surveyed the Louisiade Archipelago and the south-east coast of New Guinea.

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[1] *A Voyage to New Guinea and the Moluccas*, London, 1779.
[2] *Narrative of the Surveying of H.M.S. "Fly,"* 1842-46.

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In doing so, Captain Owen Stanley marked off one mountain which he estimated at 13,205 feet in height, and fifteen others, eight of which reached an altitude of over 7,000 feet. He describes the coast natives as living in huts built on stages, constructed on poles, for the purpose, as he supposed, of preventing the attacks of snakes and other venomous reptiles. The aborigines were moderately friendly, and were ready to barter. The use of fire-arms they did not understand, at first imagining the muskets of the party to be utensils for carrying water. In common with all others who had visited the country, Captain Stanley describes it as being most magnificent, growing profusely the most valuable products of the Moluccas. At one of their first anchorages the officers and men of the expedition were received with much respect and enthusiasm. The fair sex displayed the greatest curiosity, and seemed excessively proud at being noticed; for on Dr. MacGillivray examining the tattooing on one woman, the others immediately pressed forward to show theirs, directing particular attention to the difference of patterns. This mode of adornment was rare among the men, but among the women it extended over the face, the forepart of the arms, and the whole front of the body, usually, but not always, leaving the back untouched. The pattern for the body consisted of series of vertical stripes less than an inch apart, connected by zig-zag and other markings. That over the face was more complicated, and on the forearm and wrist was frequently so elaborate as to assume the appearance of beautiful net-work. The men were dressed in the scanty or negative manner already indicated, but the females wore petticoats of pandanus leaf, divided into long grass-like shreds, which extended to the knees. The covering worn by the girls consisted of single lengths of the same material attached to a string tied round the waist; but the women's petticoats were larger and thicker, composed of three layers of different degrees of fineness and length, forming as many flounces, the upper one of more finely divided stuff than the rest. Two or three of these petticoats were usually worn, and in cold or wet weather the outer one was untied and fastened round the neck, covering the upper part of the body like a cape or short cloak. The ladies dressed their hair twisted up into "thrums," like those of a mop.

Considering the low social and intellectual condition of the people of New Guinea, it is natural that the account of one observer should be, in many respects, only the substantial iteration of others. Yet it is equally natural to expect, in the case of the members of the human family, distributed over an island of such vast extent, that there would be not only some considerable divergence in character, but also the possible existence of racial and original differences. Even with our limited knowledge—and it must be remembered that, as very little has been recorded about New Guinea, except by marine explorers, the interior of the country is yet almost absolutely *terra incognita*—it is safe to

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predicate the existence of two distinct races—the Papuans, who have strong affinities with the Australian aborigines, and the Haraforas, who are distinguishable by their lighter colour, straighter hair, and greater litheness and activity of body. Dr. MacGillivray remarks that the Papuans he encountered seemed resolvable into several indistinct types, with intermediate gradations; and he occasionally met with strongly-marked Negro characteristics, but more frequently with the Jewish cast of features, and now and then with a face perfectly Malayan in its outline.[1] Captain Moresby describes the natives of the eastern extremity of New Guinea and of the neighbouring isles, as differing widely from the tall, muscular, fierce-looking, black savages of Torres Straits, being of comparatively small stature, lithe, copper-coloured, with high cheek-bones, noses inclined to be aquiline, and a pleasing expression of countenance.

Captain Moresby's acquaintance with these people, indeed, was friendly throughout, and their kindness in many cases extreme. It required, however, some management to get over their occasional timidity. After an interesting flirtation, Captain Moresby relates that "at last one bold islander, enticed by many presents, and encouraged by much patting on the back, with 'Come along, old fellow,' slowly climbed the ladder of the *Basilisk*, and stood on our quarter-deck, looking scared, and squeezing his nose spasmodically with one forefinger and thumb, and his navel with the other. Guessing it might mean some form of salutation, we all responded in the same fashion. The sight was almost ludicrous, but the effect was instantaneous; the scared look gave place to one of delight as he looked round, and his confidence was complete. Rejoicing in our discovery, we all stood on the gangways, and so displayed our knowledge that we made friends of the whole crowd."[2] This bit of knowledge of New Guinea etiquette proved useful on many subsequent occasions, in the course of which it was ascertained that another native mode of concluding friendships consisted in dashing out the brains of a dog as a sort of sacrificial offering.

The high ranges of mountains which run through New Guinea, with the numerous spurs extending to the coast, confer upon the island a splendid river system, some of the streams of which are known to be navigable for nearly two hundred miles into the interior of the country. From its very situation, New Guinea enjoys all the luxuriance of tropical vegetation. The cocoanut tree grows along the whole of the coast-line; the nutmeg tree is indigenous, and is plentiful in all parts of the interior so far as they are known; while the researches of later explorers show that the sago-palm, the plaintain, and the pine-apple grow on the river

[1] *Narrative of the Voyage of H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* 1853.

[2] Captain John Moresby's *New Guinea and Polynesia. Discoveries and Surveys in New Guinea and the D'Entrecasteaux Islands.* London, 1876.

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flats in the greatest profusion and perfection. The island also produces the sugar-cane, yams, and sweet potatoes; with arrowroot and rice, as good as any grown in South Carolina. The timber is of the most splendid description, and consists of ebony, mahogany, the odoriferous rosamela, ragubuku, much in request for cabinet work, with the tree that produces the valuable massoy-bark, so well known and prized by the Javanese for its medicinal virtues.

The temperature is not so high as might be expected in a country in so close contact with the equator; the long and lofty ranges of mountains collecting the moisture, and thus adding the quality of humidity to the comparative coolness of the atmosphere. In this respect it contrasts strongly with the climate of the opposite continent of Australia, with its vast barren wastes of sandy, waterless, and almost treeless deserts. Under all its disadvantages as at present existing, the climate of New Guinea, in the dry season, is not unfavourable to the European constitution; but when the wet sets in, fever is apt to come with it, and few are able to withstand it. Many of the gold-miners in the later prospecting expeditions from Australia were prostrated by this fever, which, in several cases, was fatal. The sea coast has been found very unhealthy, even the natives suffering; but as the elevated land has been reached, it has been found to be more salubrious. The unhealthiness seems to be mainly attributable to the rank vegetation, and to the accumulations of decayed vegetable matter which the partial clearance of the ground would, no doubt, ameliorate, if not altogether remove. Captain Cook described the coast as low, but clothed with a richness of trees and herbage which exceeded all description. Pierre Sonnerat, a contemporary of Captain Cook's, who finds fault with the Papuans for their "hideous and frightful aspect," and grimly avers that the character of these savages answers to their exterior, remarks that it is, nevertheless, upon the soil inhabited by these monsters that nature has placed her most rare, her most precious, most singular, most brilliant productions, judging them even by the small number offered to strangers by these very men.[1]

In such expressions as the foregoing it is inevitable to recognise an allusion to the birds of paradise, of which it is difficult to determine whether they are more a poem, or a dream of beauty. Of these there are about a dozen varieties, which assume the half-celestial leadership of some sixty species of birds, all of which, although inferior in degree, are nevertheless remarkable for the richness and brilliancy of their plumage. Pigeons and kingfishers abound, with some remarkable species of flycatcher, and flocks of parrots innumerable. Altogether there is reason to believe that New Guinea is one of the richest countries of the world as regards the beauty and variety of its land and flying birds.

[1] *Voyage à la Nouvelle Guinée.* Paris, 1776.

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In this connection of winged creatures it may be mentioned that the insect world is numerously and gorgeously represented. Butterflies of the most splendid hues divide and agitate the heated air with their prismatic fluttering; whilst ants, *per contra*, are both numerous and voracious. A little way inland, also, it must be said that the traveller is pretty sure to meet with an insufferable torment in the shape of a minute reddish insect, which covers the body from head to foot with pimples, causing the greatest irritation.

Captain Moresby did not improve upon the discoveries of his predecessors by finding any strange plants or animals in the course of his remarkable researches; but he hints at the traces of a large, grass-eating animal, which were believed to have been deposited by a rhinoceros.

It was in the year 1869 that the German geographical journal, *Petermann's Mittheilungen*, called attention to the apathy displayed with regard to this splendid island, the entire population of which—from very incomplete data, it must be conceded—has been estimated to be under a quarter of a million. Immediately the exploring world turned their eyes in the direction indicated. The history of New Guinea, if it may be said to have a history, is being now built up day by day, and every mail brings us news of new places discovered, and friendly intercourse with the inhabitants established. Light is beginning to penetrate the obscurity in which Papua has been so long enveloped; and Russians, Italians, Germans, and English have awakened from their trance to a resolute determination to dispel the mist of ignorance which had for ages shrouded the island. It may seem invidious to indulge in nominal preferences or distinctions; but when the work of New Guinea exploration is to the front, it is impossible to postpone the names of Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace and Mr. L. M. D'Albertis, whose works, with those of others in the same department of investigation, are particularised below.[1] "It may be safely said," writes a lucid author and trusted geographer, a sometime resident and official of that Queensland which is credited with having provisionally annexed New Guinea to the British crown—"it may be safely said that within the last ten years we have learnt more concerning Papua than has been known in the three centuries and a half that have elapsed since its first discovery by Europeans."[2]

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[1] Wallace's *Malay Archipelago*, London, 1872; Albertis' *New Guinea: What I Did and What I Saw*, London, 1880; Commander J. Lort Stokes's *Discoveries in Australia*, 1837-1843, London, 1846; Rev. S. M'Farlane's *Story of the Lifu Mission*, London, 1873; Rev. A. W. Murray's *Forty Years' Mission Work in Polynesia & New Guinea*, London, 1876; Rev. W. Wyatt Gill's *Life in the Southern Isles; or, Scenes and Incidents in the South Pacific & New Guinea*, London, 1876; Mr. Octavius C. Stone's *Few Months in New Guinea*, London, 1880.

[2] *The Fifth Continent, with the Adjacent Islands.* By Charles H. Fdon, author of *My Wife and I in Queensland*, &c., &c.

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The languages of Papua, so far, have not to any great extent formed the subject of scientific investigation; but they are believed to resemble not only those of the interior of New Britain and New Ireland, but of the Sunda and Philippine Islands. Some German missionaries, stationed at Mansinam, a small island off the coast, found the Papuan language of that district so poor, that they could not translate the Bible into it without the use of Malay words, the introduction of which rendered its intelligent reading by the Papuans extremely problematical. These men, Messrs. Otto and Grisler, laboured under the disadvantage of being allowed, if not obliged, to eke out the pittance which they received as salary from Europe, by trading speculations. Their spiritual functions and pretensions were thus overlaid and obscured by the ordinary practices of a prudential commerce; a circumstance which was found by Mr. Wallace to stand portentously in the way of their success. "The only nominal converts yet made," writes that gentleman, referring to his observations in 1858, "are a few of the women; and some few of the children attend school, and are being taught to read, but they make little progress." [1]

The character of the natives of New Guinea is very likely to have been traduced by those who have injured them, in order to palliate their own treachery, truculence, tyranny, and varied transgression. That they have been as much sinned against as sinning is freely allowed by naval and national generosity. Captain Moresby was not the first apologist of the Papuan at the expense of European aggressors; and Captain Henry Keppel, amongst others, has given the much maligned natives of New Guinea, whom he visited in 1849, the benefit of the doubt and of benevolent surmise. "The little we saw of the natives," he says, "confirmed what we had heard, that they are a finer race than on any of the islands. Nor do I believe that their ferocity and cannibalism is correct to the extent reported. A few communities along the coast may from former ill-treatment by the more civilised pale-faced man have become suspicious and treacherous, but I would fain hope that a country in which nature appears to have been so bountiful is not marred in its principal features by possessing a race of inhabitants such as they have been described. The country of New Guinea offers an inviting and unbounded field to the philanthropist. The well-directed operations of a few high-minded capitalists—nay, of one individual of exactly the right stamp—might open such a market for European productions, as would soon return any preliminary outlay 'ten-fold into their bosoms.' New Guinea calls for a just government, and a system of protection as once did Sarawak. There are similar materials to work upon: but not every day are individuals to be found willing to

[1] *The Malay Archipelago: the Land of the Orang-Utan and the Bird of Paradise.*

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sacrifice health and fortune for the benefit of strangers and succeeding generations." [1]

The idea of forming settlements in a country so fascinating to enterprise is one which may now be said to have acquired almost a venerable standing. But the attempts at colonisation, whether made by expeditions fitted out in Australia or elsewhere, have hitherto resulted in failure. The alternative method of intercourse to be effected by annexation remained to be considered. And, in fact, this alternative was considered, on the whole, with complacency and approbation by Captain Moresby. *On the whole*, it is to be understood; for he is not without misgiving and compunction with respect to our assuming the government over savage races. He contrasts the squalid poverty so often seen in humble life in England with the plenty and the cleanliness that met him at every step, and is inclined to wonder sceptically if these people have anything to gain by civilisation. A pious *insouciance* comes for the solution of his embarrassment. "Pondering on the fate of other original races when brought into contact with the white, I was ready to wish that their happy homes had never been seen by us. But considerations of this kind cannot be entertained by those who see a simple duty before them, and have means to execute it. We were not responsible for the issues, and Providence may surely be trusted to work out its own ends." [2]

The annexation of New Guinea, if it should become a *fait accompli*, either directly to this country or indirectly through the action of one of our almost contiguous colonies, would at any rate carry with it the compensation of being attended by an earnest and co-extensive effort after its spiritual annexation and incorporation with the widening domains of Christendom. Even under a *régime* of which it is difficult at the present moment to determine whether it is past or still continuing, New Guinea has been for several years a field of British missionary adventures; the special honours of which, as in the case of Madagascar, attach to the evangelists of the London Missionary Society. It is only two or three months, indeed, since public attention was drawn to the fact of their labours by the tidings of the mishap to their vessel *Mayol* in the Fly river.

The operations of the London Missionary Society commenced in 1871, under the Rev. S. M'Farlane and the Rev. A. W. Murray. "Port Moresby was first fixed upon as a centre, though it would have been transferred if a more healthy spot could have been found. The operations of the mission have been much hindered by the general unhealthiness of the visited parts of the island, a fever that spared not even the natives being prevalent. Mission stations have been established in various parts of the south-

[1] *A Visit to the Indian Archipelago, in H.M.S. "Meander."* By Captain the Hon. Henry Keppel, R.N. London 1853.
[2] *Discoveries in New Guinea.*

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eastern end of the island, the principal one being at Port Moresby, where the Rev. W. G. Lawes, of the London Missionary Society, is located. This was believed to be a healthy spot, and the natives hereabout appear to be a little more tractable than in other parts. There are in all upwards of twenty-seven stations connected with the Mission. As the result of missionary influence it has been said that intercourse may now be safely held with the majority of villages on a coast-line of 250 miles, from Port Moresby to East Cape; and this is mainly due to the Rev. Mr. Chalmers, whilst to Mr. Lawes is the like result to be attributed as regards the mountain ranges behind Port Moresby."[1]

[1] *Australian Handbook (incorporating New Zealand, Fiji, and New Guinea)*, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, 1883.

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SILVERMEAD.

Chapter XVIII.

The two women stood and watched the retreating carriage well out of sight before either of them spoke; naturally there was nothing very cheerful for either of them to say. Perhaps also—for who shall measure the unreasonableness of our natures—they each thought it possible that that dark, even black-blue brougham might yet be stopped, turn round, and Sir Howard come back to say something alike decisive and cheering. Needless to say, no such contingency occurred. Presently the old lady glided her hand within her grandchild's with more gentleness than of wont belonged to her, and whispered:

"Well?"

"He evidently knows nothing."

"Are you sure?"

"Quite, gran'ma! I am not very old or very wise, and although no doubt many men are great actors, I feel sure it is not a talent which belongs to Sir Howard."

"Then?"

"Then he could not have put on that look of surprise when I told him that Hor—Mr. Brudenell promised to call here to-day."

"Well, darling, if his uncle had nothing to do with his not coming, how do you account for the young man's inexplicable conduct?" and Lady Prendergast's tone grew shrill with anger against him of whom she was speaking.

"I do not account for it at all," said the girl, her eyes still straining out into the distance. "Perhaps he will write still."

"But I am supposing he does not."

"Then—then, gran'ma, I shall be in a maze, more even than I am now. You see every supposition seems so utterly unlikely. If, for instance, he regrets his words—if he is even determined to free himself in some way, and at any sacrifice, still we are met by the fact that Mr. Brudenell is at least a man of our world, as you pointed out yesterday. He would say or write or send word, something—anything——"

"Yes, it is most extraordinary," said the old lady, kissing her.

"We at least know that there has been no illness—no accident," pursued the poor child.

"Yes—if that is any comfort."

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"Well, it is to me," said Camilla, her true love cropping up in the midst of her wretchedness.

After a moment or two shewent on.

"One naturally thinks of the wildest possibilities, when everything is so unlikely. He—" and here she laughed, oh, such a sad little laugh—"he can't have gone out of his mind, can he, gran'ma, or Sir Howard would have told us?"

But this was of course only one of those feeble attempts at a joke, so dear to the very miserable.

Then these two women went and sat over the fire by mutual consent. The day was not very cold, though wet and cheerless, but they were in one of those moods that makes one chilly, and glad, moreover, of such comfort as a bristling, rampant, lambent English fire can confer.

And then they talked on in the same desultory way, and ever of the same subject; and so the dull day wore along; that night Camilla slept but little, and the morning mail brought nothing more interesting than bills and circulars.

Nor the morning after that, nor any morning, noon, or eve!

And the girl grew thin and ill, and her grandmother became utterly wretched and alarmed about her, so that she even regretted Camilla's old spirit of wilful sauciness, and obstinate resistance to herself. Anything were better than this apathy—so like settled despair, the old lady thought; nor did she exaggerate the girl's condition. The worst of it was Lady Prendergast, though always racking her brain on the subject, could discover nothing to be done. She even proposed taking Camilla up to town, just for a change, she said, but the latter gratefully declined.

When three weeks had thus dragged on the spirit of self-preservation spoke at last in our little heroine, and she resolved, after infinite deliberation, to write a long letter to Horace.

Should she show it to her gran'ma? Surely she told herself the old woman deserved it. On the other hand, she felt she would never achieve the same letter—the one she wanted to write—if mortal eyes other than Horace's were destined to see it. No, she would despatch her letter first, and affectionately explain the truth to her grandmother afterwards. Besides, having once determined to take this very doubtful, yet decided step, she resolved that nothing should stop her, and therefore would not put herself in the untoward position of finding herself bound to disobey, should Lady Prendergast happen to take the course of forbidding her to write to her late lover at all.

"It is wonderful, when a puzzle has but one solution, no matter how difficult, how likely we are either to solve it, or to come very near doing so, provided always that we devote time and earnestness enough to that end. It will be seen by the following that Camilla—who amply complied with these conditions, had got so far as to regard as at all events dimly possible, some such circum-

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stances as were the real cause, could she but have known it, of all that had occurred.

"My dear Horace,

"I am perhaps calling you so for the last time, but yet I cannot begin my letter in any other way, because, until I know more, I will not condemn you.

"It is no use my telling you how you have behaved to me, because you know better than I do how badly that is. I have almost worn my brain out with trying to account for it, or explain it in any conceivable way. If you were a reckless nature, with no self-respect, or a weak intellect, it would be different; but for an honourable, kind man, and so intelligent as you are, to suddenly break through every rule and law of civilised life, and to a girl that you said you loved, there must be some strong reason, and an explanation every one would understand, if you made it, if even all might not approve of it.

"Oh, I have thought and thought all day long, every day—in fact I never think of anything else, and then at night too—I do not sleep much now—and do you know what at last I have come to believe? Otherwise I would not write, you may be quite sure: besides, it would be no use. If you were utterly bad or indifferent to what I still think you, there would be no use—would there?—in appealing to you, or taking any step whatever.

"Well, I now *feel sure* that one of two things must have happened. Either you have written to me and I have not had the letter, or else you have had your mind poisoned against me by false appearances. Now nobody here would interfere with a letter for me, and as to the post failing, I have always heard that occurs so seldom as to be scarcely worth considering. So there remains the other alternative. By dint of pondering and pondering, and, indeed, praying hard for light, I have come to ask myself whether something I did between our last meeting and the Monday when you were to have come here, is not the key to the whole trouble. My grandmother will not allow me to see my father, and it is a point in which I think I have a right to deceive and disobey her. It would take too long, I mean too much space, to explain fully here, but her grievances against him are a very old affair, and I must say, in justice to her, that perhaps there have been faults on both sides.

"I have always loved my father more than I think even other girls love theirs. He has had great misfortunes. I was going to tell you all about this if you had come that afternoon, and it was months and months since we had met. In short we arranged and carried out a meeting at midnight on the Saturday after I saw you. It was here close to the house. Mr. Acton helped us. We were together for nearly half an hour and no one found us out. At least I ought to say not *that I know of*.

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"Now I come to the point. Although I do not know that I have an enemy in the world, and I do not suppose any one would be so wicked—it would be indeed a most wicked act—as to invent anything infamous to tell you about me in order to part us, yet it is a very different thing, and too common to cause much surprise, for even pretty average Christians to thoughtlessly *repeat* what they hear.

"Now, supposing my meeting with my father was discovered by some prying servant, gamekeeper or other person, and that it thus from mouth to mouth reached your ear, I say I can imagine that you, after taking due measures for ascertaining that the information was trustworthy, should say to yourself—never dreaming that it was my own father that I had met: 'Here is a girl who is utterly bad. No courtesy or consideration is due to her. She knows why she is unworthy, and it is quite superfluous that I should trouble to give her any explanation.' The more I dwell on the aspect of our position, the more I think it must be, in the main, the true one. Oh, my dear Horace, God grant that I am right, for I can bear my present anguish no more, indeed I cannot.

"You cannot form the least idea of what I suffer! I do not think men ever suffer in the same sort of way. You see I talk to you quite as if you had done nothing to forfeit my love and esteem. Nor have you, I am sure. O, I do believe so deeply in those inward promptings we have, especially after prayer. I fancy they are lights from heaven. It may appear strange that I can be so utterly unhappy and wretched about a man I have seen so little of as yourself, but oh, Horace, I never saw anyone before that I cared the least about in the way of love. Besides, you showed what you felt for me from the very first, I thought, and so I began giving myself up to love you before you spoke to me at the ball. So when I then answered that I too cared for you, it must have appeared, oh such old news. Did it not?

"Dear me, I have written sheets and sheets, yet I am so sorry to leave off. This is the only thing I have enjoyed doing since that Monday you did not come. The thought strikes me that you will have this to-morrow; that you will write at once, and that the next morning I may be—for all my present misery—by many, many degrees the happiest girl in England or out of it.

"I am smiling, laughing, Horace, at the bare thought. Good-bye.

"Ever till death, your own

"CAMILLA."

The all important missive written, the next step on which she held a council with herself was, how she should send it. She did not know Horace's town address. Far was she from conceiving

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Sir Howard capable of opening a letter not addressed to him; but if she directed it to his care, there was not only the chance of his opening it by mistake, and half reading it before he knew what he was about, but she felt him to be an enemy to her cause, and, without exactly putting these reasons into form, Camilla dimly foresaw various possible objections to this plan, and, moreover, instinctively recoiled from it.

"No, it should not go to Massing."

Even had she known the young recalcitrant's abode in London, or his club, it would never do to place a letter, addressed to him in her own hand, into the Silvermead letter-box. The butler might notice it, and tell the lady's-maid, who might—who would tell my lady, and—no, that was not to be thought of.

Camilla had written in the "dead waste and middle of the night" and in the seclusion of her own room. She had therefore all the next day till post time to decide the above knotty point. What she deemed a lucky chance favoured her.

There had been, sometime before, much talk of getting from London a stained glass window for the conservatory, to mitigate the glare on the south side. Lady Prendergast had spoken one day to Cyril Acton about it. Glass chanced to be rather a hobby of his, and he recommended a certain firm in Lambeth for executing the work. Subsequently two or three notes had passed between them relative to this, and now, just as Camilla was wondering how to get out of her difficulty, the old lady said:

"Oh, by-the-bye, dearest, here are the measurements of the sash; I wish you would write to good kind Mr. Acton for me, and enclose them. Say I like the design particularly."

Here then was her opportunity. Acton, who moved in the same society, had probably met Horace several times already since she had introduced them to one another. At any rate, even if Acton did not know the latter's address, nothing could be easier than for him to find it out. Needless to say she at once accepted the old lady's commission, and having fulfilled it, added:

"I have to bother you also with a favour I want you to do for *me*. If you do not happen to know Mr. Horace Brudenell's address, will you kindly find it out and send him the enclosed letter from me? I shall perhaps some day tell you more upon the subject, but cannot do so at present. Neither can I explain to you now why you are to make no allusion to this matter in any letter you may write to my grandmother, or indeed in any way to any person.

"Your old friend,

"CAMILLA HARDING."

We are nearly all of us more or less sanguine when we are young, and a bold and would-be decisive measure strenuously carried out is always a great fillip to hopefulness. Before writing

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that momentous letter to her lover, we have seen Camilla settle down into a state of almost blank despair. It was evident to her that if she remained passive nothing would happen, as she naïvely put it, and she came to the conclusion that any issue was less bearable than that. Now that she had acted, there was always the chance—likely or not—of her letter tearing some evil veil from her beloved's eyes and bringing this apparently bewitched matter right again. The re-action was wonderful. With the buoyancy of her seventeen summers the eudaimometer of her heart sprang up almost to exultation point. This girl had naturally a great talent for happiness.

Camilla told herself that if she could only delude herself into a bright mood for a few days, it would be an immense gain to her in mind, health and looks, the importance of which could not be exaggerated, seeing the terrible probability there still was of all these commodities being soon strained and taxed to the utmost—and for an indefinite period of time.

It was wonderful how the valiant little thing struggled to be gay, and to appear so. She did the latter so well and persistently, that often and often the simulated feeling became a real one, as so constantly happens in the experience of us all.

Lady Prendergast's surprise and joy at what she called this bound which Camilla had taken, as it were, from the valleys of gloom to the almost frolicsome heights of sunlit brightness, were, it need hardly be said, considerable. She feared, however, to question her as to the cause. Not having sufficient faith in the solid bases of this change, she feared lest the very analysis should dispel it. The wise old woman had learnt nearly seventy years ago the result of fingering a soap bubble. One day, however, she ventured to say:

"Camilla, my own, you look lovely to-day, I am so delighted, you have got back your roses."

"Oh gran'ma," the girl replied, gaily tripping to the looking-glass to verify the compliment, "I ought to look happy, I feel light-hearted as a bird."

"And why, may one ask?"

"Yes—I have had a bright dream."

"A dream?"

"Yes, dearest, and as I believe in it, for a wonder, it is as good as a reality," and she run down the lawn hatless, perhaps to escape any closer interrogation.

"Yes," mused the aged lady, as she gazed upon her, "she is a strange girl. Her wretched father's elasticity and mad spirits, always ready to break forth on the smallest occasion, and yet all her poor darling mother's depth of character, her feelings, honour, pride. What a dazzling butterfly she looks disporting there among the sunbeams and the flowers! Ah, God grant that the bloom be not cruelly torn from her wings! Or, if for some wise

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purpose this bitterness must come, then grant that I be not by to see it!"

And Lady Prendergast put her handkerchief to her tearful eyes and hurried away.

Chapter XIX.

Cyril Acton inhabits a comfortable set of rooms in South Audley Street. He is sitting there one May morning in a somewhat restless mood, trying to read the paper after a nine o'clock breakfast—a meal which had consisted of a couple of eggs, some tea and toast. If this young man has his cherished vices, gluttony and insobriety are not among them.

No, Cyril Acton is ambitious—fiercely, unscrupulously so, and he is seldom ever tempted by such things as may clog his darling ends. Young as he is, he has already grown furious with fate, and regards all men and women as mere tools, so many chess men to his hand. Oh, but he is clever—knows it—glories in it—and the cleverest thing he does is successfully to conceal his aims, and harder still, his want of heart, from the great bulk of those with whom he associates. Physically almost a coward, save when his keen interests goad him to some fitful mastery over his nerves, he morally knows no fear of things either earthly or unseen.

His position is no doubt somewhat cruel, and enough to sour a far better nature; indeed the case is a singularly hard and strange, though not an unparalleled, one.

His father, now Viscount Hammersley, when travelling as a youth of three-and-twenty in the United States, chanced to meet a young Irish lady lately arrived there, and who, like most of her nation, was a Roman Catholic. The girl was of good family, and Cyril's father had at that time not the faintest apparent chance of inheriting the family wealth and honours. The youthful pair became attached, and were married at a small town in Florida, little dreaming that the law of that state had certain clauses regarding mixed marriages, which, unless conformed with, would cast a fearful shade over their whole existence.

It was not until three years afterwards, when they had already a son and daughter, and when a number of Actons had happened to die off most obligingly, that they discovered simultaneously with Mr. Acton's accession to the titles and estates of their illustrious house, that he had no wife, and that the children born to him were illegitimate.

The unhappy pair now heard for the first time that in the place where their supposed marriage took place it is obligatory, when one of the parties is a Roman Catholic, the other a Protestant, to make declaration of the fact, or the ceremony is null and void. Heaven and earth were moved to set matters right, but in

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vain. It was in nobody's power—not even of the omnipotent British parliament—to redress the past.

All that could be done was for a new marriage to be gone through, which step was of course taken, and the unfortunate mother became a wife and a viscountess, but, alas! nothing could be found to avail the children. No, they must pass through life as the illegitimate issue of blameless parents. Now it befel that three months after the new marriage there came another son, but whether owing to the anguish its mother had gone through, or to some other cause, it proved from the first a complete cripple, and a few months revealed only too certainly that it was also of weak intellect.

Lady Hammersley, although no reproach attached to her, was of a highly sensitive nature, so that with every right and opportunity for entering the most fashionable circles, she shrank from showing herself where she knew her cruel and strange story must be for ever whispered around her.

Persuading her loving husband to emigrate once more, they henceforth took up their abode in a somewhat remote part of Canada, where at the period now reached they still continued to reside, Lord Hammersley occasionally coming over to England.

It was there that little by little they framed and matured a plan which, if not to be defended, can at least claim mitigating circumstances in its favour.

This was nothing less than the transposition of their two sons. Profiting by a journey of some two hundred miles to change all their servants, and also their head-quarters from one town where they knew almost nobody to another where they had never set foot, they simply interchanged the names and ages of the two boys and the trick was done; to salve their consciences, they told themselves that the poor rightful heir, Cyril, could never have been benefited in any way by his position, while their beloved Lucius, who now was made to drop that appellation for ever, was only restored to what they called "his moral rights before Heaven," he being framed in every way to shine and enjoy, and alike to make up for their own obscurity and brilliantly to carry on the ancient honours of their house.

The surreptitiously legitimatised boy being by this time seven years old—for the plot was not conceived and carried out with any rash haste—it became of course necessary to let him into the secret, and to explain to him, as far as possible, all the complex bearings of the strangely intricate case.

Naturally a precocious youngster, especially where self-interest was concerned, he henceforth appeared even more wonderfully developed, both in mind and body, than he really was, for he had to profess to be two full years younger than he actually was. It was truly wonderful how the little Lucius, henceforth Cyril, grasped and digested the whole situation, and even in time threw

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out many a valuable suggestion which had escaped the more limited acumen of the parental plotters. Thus, when there became question of sending him across the ocean to Eton, burning as they all were to launch their piratical human craft upon the home seas of life, and test how it may float, it was the boy himself who pointed out that two years' delay were imperative, for he said:

"It is easier for a fellow of fourteen to pass for twelve than for one of twelve to pass for ten. That you know—" and then he lowered his voice from habitual caution—"is why you always hid me away so when I was little."

For of course no urchin of a dozen summers considers himself small.

O, how little did these fond, foolish parents dream that it was to this very manufactured Cyril, above all, that they were cruel and unjust! That a peerage with all its worldly accompaniments was but a poor indemnity for making his whole existence one long enacted lie! Yet such was most undoubtedly the case. By the light in which he was educated, success was everything, truth nothing.

It was not one falsehood of which they were guilty, but a whole brood, a progeny, a legion of lies, deceptions, wrongs of all kinds.

If it is a platitude to say that, once abandon the right path, we know not whither we may stray, it is one that cannot be repeated too often. Here was a fearful case in point. Not only did this youth grow up utterly dead to all moral principle, but, some ten years after the first evil step had been taken, the perpetrators found themselves in the following appalling situation.

Hammersley is a female title. It so happened that when Cyril was really seventeen, and actually at Eton—no doubt having been ever cast upon his genuineness—the poor idiot cripple, who had hardly ever known a day's health, breathed his last. Lord and Lady Hammersley had no more children after he was born. Unless then her ladyship betook herself to another world, and my lord were to marry again, it was evident that the title and estates ought, at his death, to devolve upon the next legitimate heir, who was no other than our plain friend Jack Forbes, his father's mother having been an Acton, daughter of the eighth Viscount and fourteenth Baron Hammersley.

Here then was the fearful dilemma, as it did not fail to present itself to the unhappy present bearer of the title. Either he must proclaim himself a cheat, and his son illegitimate, or he must do his cousin Forbes a monstrous wrong. Jack's present position, of course, depending vastly upon whether he was merely a well-connected bachelor with five hundred a year and no prospects—supposed to be at the Bar—or whether he shone forth as heir presumptive to the rich and very noble Lord Hammersley. To do the viscount justice, he not only hesitated long and sorely

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over the momentous questions, but he actually arrived at the very brink of taking the right and honourable course. Unhappily his wife talked him over. Perhaps that was just what he wanted.

I do not believe in men being talked over against their will. Witness how hopeless it is to turn any of them from a purpose on which their heart is really set.

Lady Hammersley's argument was, to say the least, a specious one. To sum it up in her own words, it was as follows:—

"If you blast my boy, you kill me. I know you would marry again, you have never denied it, and I wish it. You would have another son, and what would your cousin Forbes be the better?"

No doubt many fairly respectable people—mothers especially, and who pass for very edifying personages, will say she was right, and that they would do the same. As for their doing the same, that is no argument, although constantly put forth as one, still it is most fortunate for many of us that we are not tested by any such crucial ordeal. Needless to say that the young Etonian was not consulted under the new light—which his brother's death threw upon the question, nor is there a doubt as to what his advice would have been. But he saw the whole bearings of the case perfectly well without anybody to point them out, and chiefly with the result of conceiving a fixed hatred for his kinsman Jack, whom at that time he had never seen.

Popular alike at school and college, with that sort of popularity which is to be acquired by a very clever individual of means and station, who makes it one of his chief aims, Cyril both pretended to feel what he did not and concealed what he really felt. Only the very sharp ones saw through him. These he detected, and contrived generally to make it worth their while not to expose so useful and agreeable a sham.

At Cambridge he took a fair degree, less from hard work than great natural facility. Then he made the tour of Europe, during which he fell in with, and saw much of, Cave Harding and his little daughter; after that he went and paid a duty visit to his family—the second only since he first left them. He liked and got on with them well enough, but he was hardly what you would call a very affectionate son, though, happily, his parents failed to see it, and he hurried back with what decent speed he could to the pursuit of his little plans on this side of the water. Although his father made him a princely allowance, he was always asking for more, while out of the thousands he received he spent barely six hundred a year, and, in fact, did nothing but hoard. To explain to the world the modesty of his state he let it be understood that his father was the real miser, and he thereby gave an avowable, if not very creditable motive for his parents' long residence in Canada; averring that the cheapness of that country was, in Lord Hammersley's eyes, its greatest charm.

The true secret was that, notwithstanding all precautions taken,

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Cyril lived in constant dread of the whole fraud being discovered, and he told himself that the only way to palliate the blow, if it should fall, was to feather his nest while the sun shone, in order that loss of credit and station should, in any case, not be aggravated by

"The thorny point of bare distress."

For, be it known, that even now, after some three and twenty years, there were yet those living who might possibly remember the truth, and, either from a sense of duty, or motives of gain, reveal it. Among these were the eminent doctor, Sir Ewing Crofton, who had attended Lady Hammersley in her last confinement, and his assistant, as also the nurses, a class often endowed with strangely retentive memories.

Long and anxiously had the guilty ones pondered as to whether it were wiser to strive and secure, by any means, and at any price, the silence of these, and one or two other people, or to leave them alone, trusting only to chance and thus possible forgetfulness. At last it was decided to follow the latter and probably the wiser course. Sir Ewing was of too high standing for it to be possible to bribe him either directly or indirectly, and he being the best educated among those who knew this secret, which they were not aware was anything of the kind, was most likely to retain the facts still in his mind. To attempt to shut the mouths of the humbler persons was, of course, to put themselves irrevocably in their power.

But by far the wisest precaution taken by the Hammersleys and their son, was to agree among themselves that, if the fatal truth should at any period transpire, all were to swear that Cyril had never had any knowledge of the fraud. Thus, whatever wrong had been done, he, at least, was always to have clean hands and his personal honour to suffer no assoil.

It was, moreover, an understood point that no compromising allusion, even of the vaguest, to the guilty secret was ever to be made in any of their letters to one another.

Having now given this somewhat curious key to the young man's character, it is time to return to him and his doings on the morning in question. From his apparent inability to settle down to anything—a most unusual mood with him—it is evident he expects somebody, and that no mere gossipping visitor. Nor is he kept long waiting. After a rather languid knock at the street door, Mr. Harding is announced, and the friends give a cordial hand-shake.

"You are rather late," says Acton.

"My dear boy, you keep such unearthly hours," returned Camilla's papa, making himself snug in the most comfortable chair the room afforded, his back to the light.

"Why, it is ten o'clock," said Cyril.

"Well, I was hard at it till three, and——"

"Hard at what?"

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"Why, fives," with a bland smile.

"Fives!"

"Ecarté. Don't you remember my little joke?"

"You won—I see."

"How do you know?"

"*Ca se voit.* How much?"

"Only a hundred. Couldn't get the money on."

"Got paid?"

"Half. Rest to-morrow. It was all right. Feller said he'd only fifty ready when we began."

Now, Acton, albeit for his own wise ends a "miser," was fond of cards and excelled at them. He contrived to make them profitable too, for, although he did not care how much he won, he was never known to lose more than a very few pounds at a sitting. With his habitual cunning he had seen, on first meeting Cave Harding, how much he might learn of the sketches of play from that practised hand, and this had been perhaps the main cause why he had cultivated the intimacy. He had at this moment, however, other designs upon that very unsatisfactory person.

"Well, now, my dear Harding, let's talk," said Cyril, seating himself opposite his visitor, towards whom he pushed a box of cigars as the latter took one—he was a sensible creature, was poor Cave, in fact, like many weak men, he might be described as frightfully gregarious at all times—he asked—

"Aren't you going to smoke? I always think a cigar after breakfast—you know."

"Yes, yes, my poor friend, but don't let's discuss such things now, I have fellows coming I must see. Here. I'll roll a cigarette; now come, have you thought of our late conversation?"

"Yes, yes, about my darling. Can you ask? I swear I've thought of nothing else, Acton," and here he seized the other's hand. "You—you will never know how I love that child. To think that——"

His eyes filled with tears.

What Cyril mentally called "this cursed maudlin delay" though only what he expected, yet bored him to death.

"I know, I know, but remember," he urged, getting rid of the hand by a pressure and a push, "that we have vital things about Camilla herself—to settle, and do try and control your feelings."

But if Acton was in such a desperate hurry, that is no reason why we should be, and so let us pause a moment and contemplate Mr. Cave Harding as he sits there, his eyes full of water and his mouth full of smoke.

As Sir Howard Brudenell had said of him in his description to Horace, this votary of Fortune is wonderfully well preserved in face and figure. His hair, even now at fifty years of age, is barely streaked with grey.

There are constitutions to whom excitement seems the very

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staff of life, and not the wear and tear it is to lovers of peace and quiet. The marks of age on his face are, it is true, unmistakable; but, to see them you must go close up to him, within a foot or two; and even then a very charming face it is still. You do not wonder in looking at it, that he has a lovely daughter. In type, the Harding face is vaguely like that of Charles I. Its main beauty is in the eyes, sanguine, dreamy, speculative eyes; but all the lineaments are refined and graceful.

Strange beings these gamblers!

A physiognomist would not be surprised at the owner of such a countenance performing deeds of the highest valour and self-sacrifice; acts of mediæval heroism—or giving proofs of the sublimest love and devotion; but, on the other hand, neither would be astonished at his ruining his family, and "letting in," as it is called, every friend he had in the world.

Only get poor Cave away from cards, dice, and betting, and never was man so easily amused. Set him to romp with a child on a lawn, or to play backgammon for lollipops, and his genuine excitement and delight are wonders to behold.

You ask what on earth such a man could want with anything so gloomy as are the gayest vices. But, let a pretty face come by, and he forgot his wife; spread the green cloth, and he would stake his child's dinner upon the turn of a card. The world speaks of such men as affectionate, but weak. Alas! is not their love mere emotion, their weakness crime? When Sir Howard had last seen him he was shabby in his attire. Now, he is irreproachably dressed, a bunch of violets in his coat. The fickle goddess he worships has been smiling lately. His manner and whole bearing are unmistakably patrician. Why should they not be? He began life in that world of the highest fashion to which his birth entitled him, and there acquired a stamp which nothing but the abuse of alcohol seems to have the power to destroy. He still looks like a man who respects himself, and who knows but that he really does so?

It is quite "on the cards" as he would say, that he often speaks comfortingly to himself, somewhat in this fashion:

"A defaulter! of course I am. Is it my fault that the run against me was longer than my purse? Doom any commercial man, any steady-going farmer, and old-established firm, to persistent bad luck, and they all must become defaulters like me. In my own sphere there are enough to keep me in countenance, heaven knows! Look at the Duke of Kempton—Lord Sandown—and fifty others, who can't show; as honourable fellows as ever breathed, every one! We shall all pay some day, yes, to the utmost farthing, *with luck!*"

Then all those escapades of his with the other sex, during his poor wife's life, he laid down simply to his over appreciation of beauty.

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"Not my fault," he used to say, if expostulated with, and with something wonderfully like good faith. "I am always very sorry and ashamed of myself afterwards, I give you my honour; but at the time I am not my own master, not the least, I assure you, by Jove."

And after such kind of justification, he would go to sleep with a serene conscience and possibly dream till morning of wild flowers and nightingales.

Chapter XX.

"Come," pursued Acton, "have you decided?"

"Well really the thing is so sudden, I hardly know what to say. Why should you be in such a hurry?"

"A lover's impatience."

"In the old days, I own, I used sometimes to think—but dear me, it is hardly three weeks since she told me with her own lips——"

"I know, about Brudenell. He at any rate is out of the question. The announcement of his engagement to Lady Susan Graye is hourly expected. I met them at the Duke's last night, and he was most assiduous."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, yes, the thing is as good as settled. Whatever Lady Sue can see in him—but that is neither here nor there. I never saw a woman make such a fool of herself! She looked positively beatific, nothing less, ha, ha! as if she would jump down his throat."

"Then you think poor Lilla——"

"Hasn't a chance. Not that she'll care for the butterfly even a week. Not she. She's too much sense, too much pride."

"She has pride."

"Lord, my dear Harding, it was a mere childish fancy from the first."

"I hope so, I'm sure."

"And I knew it must die a natural death if left alone."

"Still," said the father, only half convinced, "if you heard the way she spoke of him to me."

"That's nothing."

"And of her love——"

"Why, my dear friend, how often do you suppose they had met?"

"O, perhaps a dozen times, not much more."

"Three—three in all, on my honour."

"Really?" asked Harding, relieved. "Well, I must say, then, I do not see that he can have taken deep root in her little heart."

"No deeper than she appears to have taken in his, believe me.

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Now I *truly* love her. When she was a child I loved her as a brother, though even then I indulged at times in future dreams. But it was enough to see her once more—grown into the prettiest and most attractive girl in all England—to conceive for her a love that is as loyal as it is passionate."

"And did you tell her so?"

"How could I? Scarcely had the first warm words of greeting been spoken by each of us, and just as I was about to merge the brother in the aspirant—to modulate, if I may so express it, terms of welcome into those of admiration, than she began to confide to me as many a real sister would have done all about her flirtation with Brudenell—they were then not engaged—her hopes and fears, his imaginary perfections, and all the rest of it."

"So you held up your hand and waited to be played to?"

"Just so. That of course was our first meeting. After that we were together nearly every day. I never believed the other affair would last, so did not allow myself to be miserable, but my love grew deeper every hour."

"She used to be fond of you."

"And will be again. But, my dear Harding, what I want is your sanction and support. I need not speak of her extraordinary devotion to yourself."

"Yes, the poor imprisoned darling does love me, bless her!"

"Now listen to me. Fortunately Camilla wrote to me the other day—oh, a mere nothing, a commission from Lady Prendergast about some glass, but it gives me the privilege of writing to her in return, which her grandmother might otherwise have demurred at."

"Well?"

"Well, trust me, the correspondence once begun, to conduct it to my own perfectly honourable ends. All I ask of you is this—and—well, there is nothing, *nothing* mind, you shall not ask me in return—may I tell her—not yet, you know, but when the right time comes—may I tell her that I have your authority and support, that you accept me for a son-in-law?"

"My dear boy, you know how fond I have always been of you. As far as I am concerned, I had naturally much rather have you for Lilla's husband than a fellow like—that other fellow whom I never saw."

"I am delighted."

"But you see I would in no way coerce her—or—or——"

"Who wants you, dearest friend, to do anything of the kind?" exclaimed Acton, in a tone almost more irritable than affectionate. "First I must merely tell her how her *lover* is going on, then she will see in the paper the news of his engagement. That will be the tune! I strike while the iron is hot. Pique, wounded pride, the desire to show her false one how little she cared, a thousand feelings combine to aid me."

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"But—yes, I see, I see; still I should hardly like my darling to fling herself into marriage, merely from such motives—I mean without due thought, calm reflection."

"But I plead only for betrothal, not for immediate marriage. Do you think, my good Harding, that I want to surprise a woman into marrying me, who doesn't love me?—No, no, I must win her heart, and believe me I shall win it."

"Well, well, if all you tell me of young Brudenell be true——"

"If? I give you my honour of it; besides, ask anyone. If that is all you hesitate about."

"Then, I have no more to say, my dear Cyril. I am only anxious not to take so important a step about the only being on earth I——"

"Quite so, I understand. Then it is agreed if I can win your daughter, you give her to me?"

"And only too proud. Believe me I am not insensible of the honour you do us." And the tears came again into the father's eyes, and hands were once more shaken.

"I am aware, dear boy, that my conduct in the past has been open to——"

"Not a word, not a word I beg."

"O, but it has, and I feel it deeply for Lilla's sake."

"Dearest sir, I implore."

All this was boring Acton, in spite of his joy at having carried his point.

"But my heart," concluded poor Cave, "my heart is always in the right place."

Those "other people," with whom Cyril Acton also had business—it was touching a chancery suit of his father's—of no consequence to this history—now made their appearance. Cave Harding was cordially got rid of, and this lover of Camilla number two bent his thoughts on other things.

Did he love her?

That depends upon what is understood by love. Like little Doctor Finn, false rumours of Miss Harding's monetary prospects had reached him. Indeed, Cave Harding, who knew nothing of the facts of the case, but who had a great facility for believing what he wished, was always accustomed to speak of Silvermead as certain to come to his daughter.

To say truth, Acton had mainly accepted the de Basle's invitation that he might have a look at "the little heiress," as he mentally put it, and no sooner did he set eyes on her, than he—well he did not lose his heart, he had none—but he began to conceive a passion for her charms that from that day burned in his veins with an even fiercer fire, and became part of his very life. He would very likely have gone in for her, as the saying is, even if he had found her plain—and who can possibly tell what a girl of fourteen will be like in three years?—for doubtless his god

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was money. Harding—who, adroit gamester though he was, was yet full of simplicity—never dreamt of this.

He thought, and the mistake is constantly made by far more perspicacious people, that because young Acton spent so little money, therefore he did not care for it.

With his accustomed art, we have seen that Cyril concealed from Camilla a little of his passion and his aims. His admiration he showed freely enough, but only in its strictly presentable aspect. And it was well for him he was thus cautious. No nice-minded girl can endure to be courted with a passion that is devoid of love. To the very young, this is especially revolting, and is what makes many of them instinctively loath their suitors, though they do not understand why.

Sweet little Lilla was too innocent—still too child-like to have ever conceived of such things. She thought all men loved as she did; and she was so far right, in that all real love is pure.

Living alone with her grandmother, and devoid of friend, male or female, to whom she could speak without reserve, she had hailed the arrival in the country of this favourite of hers and her father's with hearty delight, though his visit was, she knew, only to be a brief one.

As a child—when she had first known him, she was but twelve—he had always taken great notice of her, simply because it amused him to elicit her fresh and arch remarks about persons and things, to listen to her quaintly expressed little scraps of worldly wisdom so strangely picked up. Acton had hardly a poetic mind, yet in those days Lilla always reminded him of some tender hot-house flower blooming in a gutter. Many a night, when her father's luck was low, had she lain awake, longing to pray that he might be coming, but with a vague idea that she must not, because it was wicked. Acton would read all this in her jaded eyes next day. In those old times, too, it was often Lilla who played the intermediary between her father's empty pockets and rapacious hotel-keepers or landladies clamouring for their bills. On one or two rare occasions it was Cyril Acton who had lent Harding a few pounds to meet these emergencies—it was done sadly against the grain—but in the latter times how he blessed the happy instance that had prompted him to such unwonted magnanimity! He had not only been repaid, if with long delay, the small sums he had risked, but had laid up a little fund of gratitude in the little maiden's breast which had accumulated at compound interest. For Lilla was one of those not merely to remember to her dying day any favour received, but generously to exaggerate its importance. On meeting again with her old friend then, this ingenuous girl unconsciously took the acts of kindness above referred to as the key to Acton's whole character.

Surely it is a thrice-blessed thing that the brightest, most gifted among young girls do not show their cleverness by reading

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beneath the fair surface of their friends, and discovering the mud that often lies so thickly beneath; or where would be their simplicity, their sweet, though deceived, faith in the goodness of mankind, where, in a word, their charm?

But of all the deeds of Cyril Acton his late energetic assistance in enabling her to hold that fatal midnight meeting with her father was the one to which she attached the most price. It may be remembered that on the occasion of Acton's last call upon Lady Prendergast, that lady, while giving him credit for the best intentions, yet firmly informed him that he and her niece must meet no more. The cause of this was that he had then come as the avowed companion of Mr. Harding, for it had been settled among the three that this last effort should be tried upon the bitter old lady before resorting to the desperate measure which followed its failure. When the dowager discovered upon what close terms Acton and Cave Harding must necessarily be, she would have abandoned the whole policy of years had she not strenuously forbidden any further personal intercourse between the former and her pet dove. It was to soften the asperity with which she treated him on that occasion that she afterwards deputed Camilla to write about the stained glass.

Since that memorable Saturday afternoon Camilla and he had never met, and until the letter she wrote to him enclosing that long one which she charged him to forward to Horace, no correspondence had passed between them.

When Acton received that double mission one morning at his early breakfast and ran his eye eagerly over the few lines addressed to himself, his first feeling was one of satisfaction that he was alone—alone to do exactly as he might choose. The hissing urn was before him. The envelope to Horace was simply stuck down with no precautionary seal. In the coolest way in the world without even a slight inward struggle, Acton extended his hand and held the sacred trust in the steam.

Having effected his purpose he positively interrupted his frugal meal for fully ten minutes in the shameless violation of all poor little Lilla's sacred outpourings.

As he read, at each fresh evidence of the depth of her love he came to, he felt a twinge—a sort of pang, not of remorse, far from it, but of a sort of cruel rage mixed with sarcasm, he almost grinned as he perused, a sardonic exultation mingling with his jealousy.

"Yes," he inwardly muttered, "but I shall not be jealous long. The game is mine. What though she will never love me like this is she the less lovely on that account? Even should she hate me when I at last throw off the mask, why, what care I?"

He read the letter twice through from end to end, and then quietly tore it up into the most carefully small bits, and consigned it to the slop-basin.

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"Now what shall I tell her," he mused, "that I posted it? No. The post so seldom fails. I'll write that I left it myself at his club, not knowing his private address."

He did know it, for he had returned Horace's card, but she was not likely to hear of that.

"It is quite useless," he went on, "my making any decisive move at present beyond getting the old man's consent. I shall write her charming letters, of course, but I must wait for that fellow Brudenell's grand match to be blazed about before it will be any good to go down to the neighbourhood. When I do go, I must be armed with some sure scheme for getting that ancient she-dragon to remove her ban. Yes, I'll give her my sacred word to be no link between father and daughter, and what's more, I'll keep it. De Basle is a rare old trump, and delights in match-making. Strikes me he was half spooney on Lilla himself. Anyhow he told me to come down and stay a fortnight or longer, any time I chose. Yes, I think the game is altogether very decidedly in my favour, but pshaw, the clever are always lucky."

Without showing any desire to be intimate with Horace, he deemed it wise to keep on fairly friendly terms, and had always a pleasant word for him when they met, moving as they did in the same circles, this was at least two or three times a week. Horace's attentions to Lady Susan would have astonished Acton beyond bounds had he not already committed the dastardly act of reading poor Camilla's letter, before the flirtation had attracted much notice. Cyril had seen well enough what was going on at the Masham ball, and had even asked Camilla privately next day—he happened to lunch at Lady Fouroaks—whether Brudenell had not proposed. She, although much surprised, and blushing deeply, candidly admitted that he had, and that she had accepted him. Indeed she owned to herself that the questioner's old friendship robbed the step of anything that was unbecoming or wounding.

Now all was clear as day. Yes, as Camilla suggested in her pleading, tear-stained epistle to her lover, Cyril saw that some wind of that midnight encounter must somehow or other have reached Brudenell, as, otherwise, his conduct was inexplicable.

"And who," Acton asked himself, "can he suppose the mysterious Romeo to have been? Me, perhaps! Ha, ha, the idea is delicious; for I could see he was as jealous of me as a cake of ochre at the ball."

(To be continued.)

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ADVENTURES WITH MAN-EATERS.

If we are to believe writers on Sport, it is only the worn-out, decrepit tiger who becomes that dread monster—"a man-eater." He or she is represented as a mangy, lean, lanky brute, who, failing strength to slay the denizens of the forest, takes up its abode near a village, and preys solely upon its inhabitants.

These assertions are true in some instances, but many a lusty *felis* takes to the same objectionable practises, and many a pard does likewise.

Every wild beast shuns or flees from the lords of the creation, generally; there are exceptions, of course, such as a *must* elephant, or a solitary buffalo, these but prove the rule. It may be asked, then, how comes it that so many felines get over their dread of man and prey upon him? It may arise from old age, decrepitude, malformation, or an injury, which incapacitates the beast from replenishing his larder from the game which abounds in the jungles of India, as is universally believed; or a playful or alarmed tiger, in its full strength and vigour, accidentally strikes down a man, or, being hard pressed by hunger, in sheer desperation, springs upon him, and, finding how much easier he is to kill than a wild beast, or the ponderous cattle of the villagers, perseveres in procuring, for the future, the same food.

These tigers get very cunning, and are almost impossible to destroy. A case is on record, related by a well-known and truthful sportsman,[1] of a tiger he was in search of, following his elephant's footsteps, and thus eluding his pursuer. At times their daring equals their cunning, witness the following which occurred in 1851, when the 36th N.I., on being relieved by my own regiment at Samulcottah, marched for Berhampore. As is usually the case, the mess kit, or a portion thereof, was sent on ahead the evening before, so that on arrival, tea or breakfast might be ready for the officers; the detachment was marching along the high road, and was within three miles of Toonee, when an officer's servant, who was riding on a pony with a child in his arms, close to the mess guard, was carried off by a tiger, the infant being quite unhurt in the awful rush that took place. It would be interesting to know what effect, if any, the recollection of this scene may have had on the child in after life. Two of the

[1] The late Sir James Outram.

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officers and a civilian, early next morning, went back to the spot, to try and recover the body; except that they had to make their way in Indian file through thick thorny bushes, under which they had to crawl on hands and knees, the trail, marked with fragments of clothes, the cap, keys, purse, blood, and hair, of the victim, was an easy one. The body was very little mangled, so it was determined to wait for the return of the tiger, and in the meanwhile to erect a mâchan or platform in the only tree near. One of the officers returned to camp, as he had work to attend to, leaving his two comrades to watch for the man-slayer. These two took shelter from the sun, as it was then mid-day, under a bush close to, but not within sight of the body, which was not a pleasant spectacle during their meal; their gun carriers were about the spot collecting the rough materials at hand for the platform. While all were thus employed, the tiger carried off the body from their midst in open day, and through not very thick brushwood, without being observed by anyone. They endeavoured to follow the trail, but without success, for the body had then neither blood nor rags to mark the path, and the ground was hard. The beast had outwitted them and escaped with his prey. Another desperate and almost incredible attack by a man-eater was that made by one, in the Yonzaleen, on Captain C. Hill, of the 69th Regiment, who, marching along at the head of a strong force of constabulary in pursuit of a body of Shan Levies who had deserted our service, taking with them their arms, was seized by one in open day, and, after a desperate hand-to-hand encounter, lives to tell the tale. His cowardly peelers gave him no assistance, and he owed his escape to falling down suddenly when the tiger struck him on the neck, the beast going a complete somersault over him. When they met face to face again after this upset, the man on his hands and knees, with the blood pouring down his face and beard, appeared to the feline metamorphosed into a four-footed beast, more uncanny than himself; for man he did not care a pin, for the object opposed to him he did, for putting his tail between his legs, he beat a retreat. Bad as are tigers when they take to preying on man, panthers, when they follow the same homicidal propensities, are far worse.

A tiger can, but he will seldom, climb a tree. A man who is perched on an elevation or a mâchan, beyond springing distance, is generally safe. Instances have been known where one of these dreaded cats has deliberately climbed into a tree, and, after bringing down the sportsman, reascending and killing the shikarie,[1] who, bereft of his senses with fear, remained quiescent, though armed; but this, again, is an exception to the habits of the animal; but a pard can climb with the greatest facility, and often does so, lying in wait on a pendant branch, and, on anything passing

[1] Shikarie, a native sportsman.

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underneath, pouncing down upon it. Thus, when one of these lesser, but formidable felines takes to killing man, he is far more destructive than his bigger brother. Nothing is safe from him. Men, watching in their paddyfields on mâchans, disappear. Houses are entered and the inmates carried away. He becomes a scourge indeed, if not speedily killed. Very often the village is deserted. Their cunning is equal to their ferocity. Many of these pards are, in size, equal to young tigers or full-grown tigresses; their pluck and activity far greater, their ferocity and attack, when wounded, equal. I would sooner, any day, have to deal with the largest tiger than an ordinary sized panther. They take an immense deal of killing, and will, even after being shot through the heart, kill several men, if they can get at them, before giving up the ghost.

A hunter from an early age, when most men are at school, it has been my lot to rid many a village of its dreaded foe, and I will here relate two instances which are deeply engraved on my memory.

In the year 1850 I obtained six weeks' leave of absence, and, having sent on my kit some days before, dâked out to the village of Apparowpett, situated in the Neermul jungle. My object was to shoot bears, which were very plentiful, and any other game I might come across. On my arrival I found my people in a dreadful state of alarm, and I was waited upon by the head man, who prayed me by Allah to rid them of a Shaitan who was depopulating their village. Here my head servant struck in, saying: "Sahib do not stay, everything is packed and ready to go on. Mr. Pâtel (head man) is right, it is a devil and not a beast; we have been here two days in fear of our lives. The first night Kistamah, master's shikarie, was induced to sit up on a high tree, close to the village, by promise of a reward, to shoot a tiger, which, the people said, passed by nightly. There was no disturbance, no shot during the night, yet, in the morning, Kistamah had disappeared. Last night the village shikarie and master's orderly sat up in a mâchan; the orderly cannot be found, whilst the shikarie is lying dead on the mâchan; two houses were entered and two women have been carried off. Master know very well this not tiger's doing, it is a Shaitan, and the sooner we go the better." "Hold your tongue," I said, "where is Venket-a-Chillum" (another shikarie). "Khudawan, he has gone with a village peon in search of the orderly." "Pitch the camp directly and see that plenty of firewood is collected for keeping up large fires at night, and order the head man to bring the local shikaries to my quarters immediately after breakfast, and tell Venket-a-Chillum to come to me, too, directly he returns."

I was soon revelling in a bath, much required after two days' and two nights' incessant dâking; my servants with a good deal of grumbling unpacked the kit, declaring that they would all lose their lives.

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"Master can kill plenty tigers; but what can he do against the devil?"

I pitched the tents pretty close together, leaving space for our hakaries (carts), bullocks and horses between, and saw that wood was stacked all round, at intervals of twelve or fifteen yards, for lighting at night.

After breakfast the head man ushered in some six or eight more than half-naked savages, each armed with a long matchlock, who squatted on their hams in a circle in front of my tent.

When questioned about the Shaitan, all began to jabber at once; ordering them to be silent I picked out one, a venerable-looking elderly man as spokesman, and bid him speak.

With tears in his eyes and with a tremulous voice, he said:

"Feeder of the poor—a month ago, your slave had a happy home. He had three sons, each as strong as a lion, brave as Rustum, and with eyes as keen as an eagle's; they were noted shikaries and had slain many tigers, bears, leopards, and even the dreaded Koolgha (Gaur). He had two houris as daughters who were sought in marriage by all the eligible young men for miles and miles around. Hitherto prosperous—some demon became jealous of your slave's happiness. My eldest daughter, on the eve of her marriage with the Pâtel's son, went, as is customary, to a shrine a little distance off, to offer up the usual gifts. As she did not return, my eldest son went in search of her; he, too, never came back. We went in a body to the Pagoda, but beyond a drop or two of blood, we found no signs. The Pâtel's son was all but mad with grief and wanted to search the jungles all night, but we forcibly restrained him until the morning, when we all sallied forth, fully armed. We hunted unsuccessfully all day, and on reassembling at the Pâtel's house, two of our party, his and my son, were absent; we thought they would build a mâchan and remain in the jungle all night and resume the search in the morning, but they have not been heard of since. My third son was found dead a week ago at the foot of the mâchan, on which he had been watching the crops at night; two nights ago, my daughter was more than half devoured in my own house, and I am now *larchar* (hopeless)."

"What do you imagine is the cause of this wholesale destruction?"

"Gureeb peerwah! it is impossible to say; at first we put it down to Adme Khanawallah bagh (a man-eater), then we thought it might be a Bore butcha (panther); but we now believe it to be a ghoul of a Shaitan (a man-eating devil)."

All the others had tales of dire loss to relate. Scarcely a family had escaped, but had lost one or more members of their households. I told them to come again in the afternoon and would talk to them after consulting with Venket-a-Chillum; but neither he nor the peon ever turned up again.

To say that I did not feel excessively uncomfortable would be

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an untruth. My orderly and two shikaries gone—dead for all I knew—I thought it might be a party of Thugs trying to frighten us out of the neighbourhood; but then, how account for the half-eaten remains of the shikarie's daughter in his own house? How indeed account for it in any one way?

In the afternoon, after another talk with the villagers, it was determined that we should sit up two and two, guarding the passes from the rocky hills to the village. There was only a young moon, so we should have to pass the greater part of the night in total darkness; but, hating night shooting as I do, there was no help for it; something must be done to rid the village of its scourge.

The night passed quietly, but at early dawn, when natives begin to bestir themselves, frightful howls arose from the very centre of the community. I hurried there and outside of one of the principal houses lay the remains of a beautiful girl, more than half devoured. The doors were closed; but a careful search revealed, that a hole had been made in the roof, through which the despoiler had not only entered, but had dragged out its victim!

"It must be a panther!" I exclaimed.

"No, Sahib!" exclaimed all the people, "it is a devil."

However, I retained my opinion; and taking a strong body of armed men with me, I explored carefully the neighbouring hills. Marks of bears were plentiful, but I could discover no signs of panthers.

I remained here a week, and not a night passed without one or more people being killed; the loss in six months had been over one hundred. However carefully we watched, the enemy eluded us, and either some person was dragged out of a house, killed and partially eaten, or some unfortunate girl, going to a stream close by, would never be heard of again.

The people decided on deserting the village, and I could not blame them. I had lost all present chances of sport, by trying to assist them, as yet ineffectually. I did not like to abandon them until I saw them in some place of safety. Their means of transit were limited, but the poor people did not possess much, and by extemporising sledges, loading up the few carts they had, and using the rest of their cattle as pack bullocks, they managed to get as far as Seonee, distant about eight miles, by that evening. This had been deserted some little time before, also on account of man-eaters, but the houses were intact and of a better description than those at Apparowpett; into these, crowded men, women and children.

I was pretty well worn out, watching night after night, and, as mâchan shooting had failed, I proposed to try what a mart (a circular pit dug in the ground about three feet deep with the earth thrown up around it, with clods of earth left here and there

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which would resemble a man's head) would do. My followers were horrified. "If people were not safe some fifteen feet off the ground, what chance would they have in a mart? and the Shaitan would be certain to kill them." This I thought very likely, but determined to risk it. I had the huts surrounded by thorny bushes and *chevaux de frise*, lighted fires all round, except in a lane leading from the jungle to the village, which I purposely left apparently unguarded. Close to the edge of the lane, about a quarter of a mile off under a corinda bush, I dug a mart, and got in about half an hour before dusk. I took the old man whose family had been decimated and another shikarie with me. No animal could attack us but from the front, the other faces were protected by huge rocks and dense shrubs. The moon was not at the full yet, but it gave a fair light. I was dead beat, so rolled myself up in my cumbly (native blanket), and bidding the young man be on the alert (I thought he was in too great a fright to close his eyes), the old man and I were asleep in a few moments.

Most sportsmen acquire the faculty of being wide awake in an incredibly short space of time, no sooner are they awake than they have all their senses about them. Young as I was, barely eighteen, I had acquired not only this but most jungle lore. There was not a breath of wind; I was enveloped in the blanket from head to foot to keep off the mosquitoes which swarmed in myriads. A mysterious sense of danger, a warning, if I may so style it, of peril close at hand, in one moment made me wide awake. I seized my rifle quietly, and full cocking it silently, cautiously moved the covering aside, and looking towards where Sawmy, the young shikari, ought to be, I found he had fallen forward fast asleep, whilst within a foot of his neck was peering down the devilish countenance of a black panther of the largest size. I have no doubt he was just in the act of seizing the unconscious man and did not see me, for without putting the rifle up to my shoulder, I raised it until the muzzle was within an inch of its head and, pulling both triggers, blew his brains out; at the same time I scrambled out on the other side, the panther, pitching on the remains of his head on to Sawmy's back, turned a complete somersault, alighting on the old shikarie's face. Such a hullabaloo I never heard, both shikaries yelled and howled and bolted for their lives, leaving me in the lurch. Luckily the beast was stone dead.

We were a quarter of a mile from the village. I did not care to traverse that distance alone in the dark, for the path was along a dense jungle, through which the rays of the moon could not penetrate; where we had been sitting was in a little cleared place. I thought, too, from so many people having been carried off, there must be more of the family, supposing indeed that the one I had slain was one of the man-eaters. So I

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determined to take my chance and to remain where I was; all sleep had fled, and I watched until the moon disappeared. I then certainly felt lonely and uncomfortable; by my side on his back, lay the dead beast. I knew his tribe could see in the dark better than I could during the day, and I could hear my own heart thumping, until I became quite restless, and a nasty sort of sensation crept over me. I do not think it was actual fear, but something very akin to it, anticipation is always far worse than the reality, and I certainly hope never to pass such a couple of hours as I did that night between the setting of the moon and the first streak of day. It was too dark to observe objects, and I was just stretching myself, for I had been sitting in a cramped position the greater part of the night, when I heard, I thought, a slight mew in the distance. At once all uncomfortable feelings left me. I was myself again. I guessed it was the mate of the beast by my side seeking her spouse. I crouched lower down. The rifles were placed ready to hand, and on the full cock. Some time elapsed, the jungle cocks began to crow, as daylight was rapidly approaching. There is no dawn or twilight in the East, so I feared the brute had gone back to its den, but I kept quiet all the same. Without the least intimation or the slightest sound, two objects appeared as if they had dropped out of the skies right in the path. What they were I could not tell, but I let them both have it, right and left; one sprang at me, and coming in contact with the muzzle of my rifle, with great force, stretched me on my back and was on me in a moment. I had my wits about me. Seizing my good Arnachillum Shikar knife in my right hand, and rolling the cumbly any how in my left hand, which I involuntarily thrust forth in defence and which was seized at once, I drove the blade with my full force into its chest, the blood spouted out into my face, and, to make matters worse, the brute vomited the contents of its stomach right over my face, causing me to retch dreadfully, and to be as sick as itself; but I was not idle, I had repeatedly driven my blade into, as I found, a dead beast, for my antagonist's carcase lay over my legs. It was by this time day, and the valiant villagers gathering courage, hearing my shots, came to the rescue, and found me half dead from the dreadful stench of the filth over me, which proved to be half-digested human remains. I got rid of my clothes as fast as I could, and a bath soon restored me. The only wounds I had were two claw marks in the inside of my thigh—the blanket had saved my arm.

As soon as I had had my tea, I bethought me of the second panther I had fired at, and told the old shikarie to go and see whether there were any marks of blood on the trail. I abused him and Sawmy for deserting me, but they said, and truly I believe, that seeing a black beast, which they knew was not a bear, and never guessed to be a panther, struggling on the top of them, they thought it was the devil, and had bolted accordingly.

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No one had come to my assistance, as they believed I had been killed, until they heard my shots in the morning.

The men soon returned, and said there was plenty of blood on the trail. I at once determined to follow up the beast in the hopes of discovering its lair or den. I forgot to mention that the second panther was an ordinary one, a male, not quite full grown.

I collected about a dozen of the most stalwart of the villagers, who were armed in a variety of ways. A few had matchlocks, but mostly only spears or Tulwars (swords) and shields. There was no difficulty in following the trail. We found the wounded beast had been joined by two others, and were confident of overtaking our quarry, as it had frequently lain down to rest, leaving always a pool of blood behind. The marks led towards Apparowpett, not to the Rocky hills, but to the dense jungle. We went fully five miles, and came to a very marshy spot, almost impenetrable owing to a cane brake which surrounded it. The beasts had entered this, so we cut a way through, keeping an eye on the trail; the undergrowth was of the densest and very matted, but we discovered the pathway by which the beasts were in the habit of going and coming. We could not go along it even on all fours, and it was very offensive, and covered here and there with bits of cloth, human bones and hair, so we knew we were following up the man-eaters. Hoping to act the part of avenging angels or demons ere night, for ourselves we cut a path close alongside that in use by the felines. This tangled brake lasted for nearly one hundred yards, beyond, there were only bushes and immense trees, which we discovered to be all connected. They were Banians, a sacred tree among the Hindoos. The nature of it is such, that when the lateral branches become too heavy for the trunk to support, they throw down suckers, which take root in the ground, and in time become in themselves trunks which again support other branches, and so on. Often one tree—that is the original stem and its ramifications—will cover thirty or forty acres of land; under this dense foliage the undergrowth is not very formidable. We tracked the panthers to a central point which, I have no doubt, was the parent trunk; this, with the various suckers, many of them the size of an ox in circumference, formed a series of arcades or caves, and the stench told us it was the lair of the man-eaters. The villagers had many relations to avenge, and set too with a will to collect dead wood as well as green, to smoke out the varmints. It was falling noon when we surrounded this abode of abomination; in every entrance were piled dead wood and green bushes; many of the younger men, excited to a pitch of madness almost, climbed up into the branches and piled up wood over every hollow leading from the trunk to the branches above; these were fired, and, when fully in blaze, more green branches and water were procured, and no salamander could have existed for an hour in such dense smoke as arose in and about this Golgotha. We heard growls and muttered

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snarls, gasps and coughing, so knew the whole family to be there; the people round me were like demons, dancing and shouting for joy, and feeding the flames. This lasted for an hour or more, and as the fire gradually died out, portions of the stem fell down revealing the horrors inside. To explore fully was impossible, the smell of decomposed burnt flesh was too horrible; there were the remains of most of their victims, many of them still distinguishable. Out of some of the remotest recesses, we dragged forth the carcases of three female pards, one being the one I had wounded, and two others who had little ones. Amongst these we obtained but one black one, the others were of the ordinary hue; there were two adults three parts grown. In all, this colony of man-eaters consisted of one black male, three ordinary three parts grown males, three fully grown females, and nine cubs, one of them being black. All these brutes were as sleek and fat as possible, and it is almost incredible the damage this small number should have inflicted on the inhabitants. However, there was an end to them. We got back to Seonee by dark, and had a peaceful night, which we much required after all we had lately undergone. The next day we held a consultation of the elders, and it was decided to retrace their footsteps. I saw them safe back, and then continued, or rather commenced my sport; and when I passed through again, three weeks later, no person had been killed or molested during my absence. I have never been in that part of India since, but it still bears a bad name for man-eaters.

Twenty-five years passed away, from a boy almost I had become a middle-aged man; I had served the greater part of these years in Burmah and Assam, and longed to visit my old haunts again, but prior to doing so, I accepted an invitation to visit the Neilgherry Hills, and the western ghauts. We had very fair sport of a description quite new to me, but my two companions showed incipient signs of fever, and hurried back to Ooty. Shooting alone is stupid work, after youth's enthusiasm has worn off, and I was thinking of wending my way back too, when, on arriving at Pullikul, the Kurders told me they had lost several men lately from man-eating tigers. I instantly remembered my youthful adventure. It is true, many a royal tiger, panther, behemoth, taurus, bear and buffalo, to say nothing of deer, &c., had fallen by my hand, in the interval; for I had been a persistent and fortunate shikarie; but I had never forgotten the panthers of Neermul, nor the abominable bath given me by one of them. I had killed many man-eaters, but had run no great risk from them, for I had generally been mounted on an elephant, now I determined to follow these up on foot to the death. The villagers said they thought there were a couple of them, a male and female; and that they never went very far, killing one or two people every three or four days. I pitched my tent near the village, and organised a gang; these men are famous trackers, but no rain

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had fallen for many weeks, and the whereabouts of the felines could not be discovered by their trail, they were not heard of until someone was missing; their depredations extended for miles around, and the wailing of a family bereft of its support, was only too frequent. I went from place to place, sometimes accompanied only by one shikarie, Chiniah, who had been with me some years, or with beaters, trying to drive out these pests; but for three weeks I had no luck; they were never at home. At last the brutes took to killing my men, and I lost two out of my gang. I begged of the relatives to allow me to sit over the remains, but they would not; removing the bodies and burning them. True I had never been partial to such proceedings as night shooting, and I was not so keen as I had been many years before; still I had the dogged resolution of a bull dog, and did not like to be beaten, yet what was I to do? People were constantly killed, and I could get no sight of their slayers. I had one week left; I wrote to have bearers laid from Coimbatore to the nearest point to the Anamullies, on a certain day, and despairing of ridding the country of these animals, I was marching along, silently, accompanied by my two shikaries, when I heard what I knew to be a death shriek. I hastened, almost ran, towards the sound, little heeding what noise I made as I tore through the jungle, followed by my satellites, but I might have known, had I given it a thought, that I should frighten the slayer away.

There lay a wood-cutter, with his skull fractured in by a single blow; he had been also seized by the neck, whence the blood poured in torrents, but the man was stone dead. Here was my opportunity; the man would not be missed before it was too late to search for him, so as I had a little food with me, I determined to sit over the remains. The moon was at its brightest; I would not allow the body to be touched, it lay partially hidden by some fallen bamboos, but the part generally first attacked, the buttock, was exposed, so telling my men to prepare a mâchan on the nearest tree, about ten yards off, I examined the ground. There was a ravine close by, up which the monster had crept and pounced upon his victim, he would probably return the same way. I saw but the marks of one tiger, whilst my men declared they hunted in couples; they, the men, were also very reluctant to sit over the body, being superstitious that they would ever be haunted afterwards, but I knew if I did not avail myself of this chance, I should get no other; so I was firm, and told them, remain they must. We erected the mâchan as noiselessly as possible. Tigers are often driven off by the noise men make whilst preparing a câche with which to slay them; they also urged the danger we ran of getting jungle fever by sleeping out at night. I merely told them to hold their tongues, and to mount, and if I heard either of them utter a sound or make the least noise I would fasten him down close to the corpse. The men knew I did not

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threaten and not perform, so unwilling as they were, perforce they had to obey in silence. We arranged bushes to hide our place of concealment, we had no bedding, no pillows, and the bamboos which composed the floor of our platform were not very even or smooth, therefore not pleasant to sit on for some ten or twelve hours, during which we could move neither hand nor foot.

As the moon arose, the trees behind us cast their shadows over the place where the poor wood-cutter was lying; time passed, it must have been about ten, and I was dozing, when my arm was grasped by Chiniah; looking round, I found his teeth chattering, and his face as pale as a corpse, whilst the other man, with his hands over his face, sat trembling. From these I looked towards where Chiniah's horrified gaze pointed to something unearthly. I knew the fellow was afraid of nothing living, but of the unseen spirits he had a dread. I too was taken aback, the ghastly body of the wood-cutter, was slowly moving to and fro, the arms and legs occasionally lifted up, whilst no agent was visible. It made my blood run cold, and I felt a sensation as if cold water was being poured slowly down my back along the spine. I seldom touch spirits, but take some with me in case of accidents or need. I took a nip myself, and gave the two natives a strong dose each. Still the horrible contortions continued, and I knew not what to make of them. "Did I not tell you, Sahib," whispered Chiniah, "how wrong it was to sit up over the body of a Hindoo? we should have carried him to the village and had him burnt, but now we are all dead men, he will arise presently and kill us." "Hold your tongue, you fool," I replied, "the dead come not to life again in this world, there is some trick being played upon us." "Who would venture into these jungles, at this time of night, with those cursed man-eaters about," said Chiniah, "I don't know, but keep quiet." Here a jackal came along the ravine and out into the open and approached the corpse, but getting within a few yards, put his tail between his legs, and, with a frightened cry of the Pheeâl, ran for his life. "Will you believe me now, Sahib?" said Chiniah. I was getting nervous. It is a horrid sight to see a body, full of life only a few hours before, lying out in the moonlight, in its last sleep, and to know that it met its death by the fell stroke of a tiger. But the body moved backwards, its face before hidden became exposed; first one eye opened, then the other, closing and opening in a most diabolical way. There was not a sound, and I must own I should have been glad to have been in bed in my tent, and never to have seen such a sight, but, thank goodness, our suspense was not to last much longer. My two followers had succumbed, I believe they had fainted. Watching intently I saw glide across the chest of the dead man, the head of an immense rock snake; it was wider than a large plate across, and its tongue was licking the corpse all over. The movement of the limbs and the opening and shutting of the eyes, were fully explained.

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My feelings of horror disappeared and I watched the beast's every movement. Digging my penknife into Chiniah's seat of honour, I made him almost spring off the mâchan; he thought it was the devil getting hold of him at last. After staring like a madman for a while, he perceived the python and, was, if possible, in a greater panic. "He is thirty cubits long," he uttered, "and will swallow the wood-cutter first and us afterwards." I gave a silent laugh and pointed to the rifles. The movements of the snake were inaudible, but we could see the disgusting process of covering the body with saliva and after fully two hours' work, he opened his horrid jaws and began to swallow the body head foremost. Now a python's teeth are so arranged that once anything enters his mouth it cannot be rejected again. Gradually the head and neck disappeared, then the shoulders and up to the waist, when there was a terrific roar; a tiger sprang from the cover right on to the python, seizing him by the back of the neck. I have no doubt that death was instantaneous, as far as the snake was concerned, but his huge body, in circumference equals a man's and nearly thirty feet long, in convulsive movements, wound round the tiger, and we could hear the bones being crushed one after the other; the roar the tiger gave at the first squeeze was appalling; but in a few moments, the roars turned into moans, the moans into a gurgling sound and gradually they too ceased, while the contortions of the snake continued for over an hour. I never saw such a frightful sight. What is man or his strength compared to that of either of the beasts lying dead before us! We were speechless with horror and surprise at the denouement, and at the amazing strength of a moribund snake. All signs of life ceased, and we had dozed for a while, when we were awoke again by the noise of tearing of flesh; peeping over our leafy panopy, there was a tiger or tigress, making a meal off either the snake, its own kind, or the dead man. The moon was under a cloud so I waited patiently until it shone again, and then, aiming as well as I could for the shoulder, I fired both barrels, and the tigress, for such she proved, rolled over and over growling and roaring, and at last crawled into the ravine, whence we could hear her breathing until close upon daylight, when it ceased; and with it, I knew, either that she had crawled away or died. Waiting until full daylight, we descended from our perch. We first sought the tigress. She lay dead. We then examined the three bodies which presented much the appearance of Laocoon in the embrace of the serpents. Although life had been extinct for several hours, when we tried to unravel the coils from the tiger's body they resisted so stoutly that I had to send to the village for assistance; with the aid of over twenty men, and by cutting open the jaws, we released the body of the wood-cutter and stretched out the body of the python; it measured twenty-five and a half feet long. The tiger had bitten clean through

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the vertibræ just behind the junction of the head and body. The tiger, one of the largest I ever saw, as he measured ten feet two inches in length, was as if he had been beaten into a jelly, his bones were crunched to powder. The poor wood-cutter was cremated the same afternoon; the two tigers and snake were despoiled of their skins, and I never afterwards sat up at night over any kill—nor do I wish ever to do so again.

F. T. P.

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MIXED ÆSTHETES.

THE present craze for house decoration shows signs of being carried too far; and unless the *raison d'être* of a fashion is remembered, it soon falls into the natural decadence of every mere craze, a dismal reaction sets in, and the last state of that house is worse than the first.

The only real object of making one's dwelling pretty is because pretty things before the eyes are pleasant and elevating. There is no other motive for doing it—unless perhaps an antiquarian *culte* exists, to preserve and hand down antique works as a part of English history. There is nothing really sacred about a mass of ill-built walls and drains such as we call a private residence, to make it a religion to cherish, nurse, and adorn it, whether we can afford it or no—whether our neighbours and our children enjoy it or no—whether we are in the house or no?

Certainly not. The sole reason for beautifying our house is that beauty is good—the same sole reason for beautifying ourselves—and as we ourselves being alive are probably of more, not less, consequence than the bricks and mortar that have not life, it is proper to begin the process of improvement nearer home than our walls.

We enter many handsome houses that fashion has made picturesque and splendid, even among half-educated people—for fashion tosses pearls about now, as she used to scatter cinders, and the pearls occasionally surround animals that don't require them. And it not unfrequently occurs to the observer, "Why have these folks 'gone in' for these things? What good do they do them? What meaning do they attach to them?"

In a fine old Georgian room, furnished carefully in the dainty, artificial style which belonged to the period and echoed the manners of the day, scented with flowers and seated in satin, somebody plunges about in a plaid shawl, sits down in a half-dirty woollen dress on the pale satin sofas, opens what certainly looks like a common fish-basket, pulls out a coarse woollen nightcap or comforter, and proceeds with a class of work which is only fit for the housekeeper's room.

Or what is worse—you enter some picturesque, nooky room, got up after mediæval precedent, with exquisite carved chairs, fine old painted windows, and fifteenth century tapestry—all the decoration good and in character, sometimes of real antiquarian value—and

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you see the place populated by creatures, frilled and pinched into nameless forms, their hinder quarters swaying, vibrating, bobbing up and down, by reason of an appendage which appears most difficult to keep in its intended position—a thing which always wriggles to one side, or bounds up on passing a chair, and occasionally trips up the owner—and is generally as unmanageable as the "slow length" of the Wurm in Wagner's opera. These waspish creatures will strive for ever to feel comfortable in the high carven chairs—will assure you that dear Mr. So-and-So has built the house exactly after their own design—will talk about appropriateness and the influences of beauty without the slightest idea that they themselves are the most inappropriate eyesores in the room. They have got up the style, and the lingo, they have spent the money, they think they like it all, but in reality they only like fashion. They resemble the wretched boor who was sworn in an Invincible—he did not know what an Invincible was, but he was delighted to be sworn in, and if it led to heaven, or to the felon's dock, he could not help it.

Chacun à son goût. But it is better to be simple and happy than æsthetic and ridiculous. Affectation is the most repugnant quality in life. The affectation of pretending to understand what every word and movement betrays one is indifferent to, is no less contemptible than the practice of professing to be wicked and dare-devil when one is really a good sort of harmless soul. "How can a man be concealed?" said Confucius. Why not be yourself? Why not admit that you are miserable in a Queen Anne chair, and that you hate yellow and mud colour, and that you think modern things much nicer than ancient ones—until you have studied and begun to understand what is good and bad in either, and why, and until your views have insensibly and naturally developed?

Why not indeed? Who shall say that the bustling person in a half-dirty plaid, knitting comforters for the poor, is not worth a hundred times more than the empty, wicked, vicious *élégante* who loitered gracefully about that fine Georgian room one-hundred-and-fifty years ago? Why should she be ashamed of the woollen gown which is much fitter for her dutiful mission among the hospital patients, or looking properly after her servants, than the rich silk which her ancestress's hoop tossed up to her knees, and the dainty lace which certainly did not conceal her bust?

Only, that particular figure, amongst that particular furniture, is out of character from the point of view of good taste, and she would be the better, and so would the delicate satins, for using a different kind of room until such time as she sees her way to blooming out in a satin richer than the chair's, and lace finer than the mantelshelf's.

Who, again, shall deny the pinched girl, who spoils her natural graces with humps and stays, some useful place in the world? Probably she is the best of wives and daughters, having none of

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the gross conversation of mediæval women, none of their oaths and ugly ways. She may spend too much money on her wires and trimmings, and spend it in the wrong way, with a lamentable result; but she pleases her "set," whose eyes are all vitiated like her own, and so far is just on a level with more cultured people, whose culture merely teaches them to please *their* set likewise.

Only, this girl, in justice to herself, should not surround herself with those objects which, by their very refinement, draw attention to her want of it. She should be seen in rooms of the same kind as her costume—or an even worse kind—so that the *coup d'œil* may be "all of a piece," and herself still the best point in it.

A room is essentially a background, a means to an end, not the end itself. To make the walls and furniture the end, and the inhabitants subservient to them is the wrong way of decorating the house. If a room is intended to be inhabited, it is ridiculous to make it uncomfortable, by banishing every endurable seat, by employing materials that have no "wear and tear," and by making the walls obliterate the company.

If the house is markedly antique in character, there should be some regard to that in the array of the owners: for if the decoration is carried beyond the standard of the dresses possible, the object of beauty is not obtained, the result is not pleasing, but out of character.

In fact, you spoil your precious walls, injure the mild tints of your Nankeen, weaken and offend the subtle curves of your *Renaissance* cabinets, by standing near them in your loud smart silks and rhomboid outline. That fact ought to touch the milliner-ridden maiden, even if she does not mind the libel upon her own pretty form by simulating (and stimulating disease) and deformity.

So much for the people whom I will call "mixed æsthetes." For the others, who profess no æstheticism, I have no reproofs. I once said, if a girl prefers to wear green hair, instead of her own natural brown or black, it is nobody's business to criticise her, and I daresay many of her friends would admire it, especially if some princess set the fashion. Claim eccentricity only, or love of novelty, or ignorance of effects, and that is a comprehensible ground; it is only those who claim knowledge, and so ought to know better, that are blameable. I am sorry when I see a really well-made girl jogging along in a Hottentot attitude. I should like to tear off that beehive and take the scales from her eyes.

But note, I am not upholding one party more than another. Whatever my personal tastes may be, I recognise that it is a free country, and much is to be said for every school of opinion.

I condemn nothing but pretence. One's tastes are chiefly determined by one's character. Every sincere mind is interesting, and there is no need to disguise and deny one's own tastes unless they are mischievous. Some people like dark colours,

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some light, some like soft carpets, some parquetry, some like heat and profusion, others air and emptiness, and all these opinions are equally respectable.

If you like a comfortable chair, and prefer gouty paddings to æsthetic angles, say so, and have your choice. If you have pleasant associations with sharp corners and convex mirrors, don't be laughed out of your tastes. If you really like a wasp-waist, and a hump, cultivate them—only do not confuse your particular odd fantasies with abstract beauty. Admit boldly that you don't understand beauty, and don't prate and babble about the Beautiful. Plenty of people are of your way of thinking, and only those who know more on the subject you have not studied, will laugh at you.

But in your rooms, in your dress, in your habits, be consistent, be happy, be yourself. Do not adopt any non-natural ways that happen to be the fashion, and which will be traps all round to catch you tripping, like that poor would-be æsthetic lady with her picture "Jupiter and IO." What would you say to the ignoramus who insisted upon talking to a classical scholar in dog-Latin? Would you not say, much better drop the subject and find a common ground of sympathy? But that is practically what is done by people who furnish a fine house and do not make themselves correspond with it.

"Dressing up to one's house" is a practice for which æsthetes are sneered at: and we do not want houses dressed down to the level of the ugliest inmate. But if people remembered that the two D's—dress and decoration—are practically inseparable, and cannot do without each other, because they both mean the perception of beauty in detail, we should not be pestered by these empty watchwords, or by so many eyesores in common life.

Why is a simple peasant's house—nay, a vile London den—picturesque—that is, a fit subject for a picture, be it hideous or pleasant? Just because it is consistent in itself. The squalor, the dirt, the rags, the evil faces, the gin-can, the guttering dip in a bottle, throwing a sharp, fitful glare on this and that, and inky shadows behind—they form a picture, definite, consistent, instructive. The homely country cottage, with brick floor, and wood fire, with its shelf valanced by a bit of patchwork, the simple pots and kettles, the clean, rustic children playing with a kitten, or a straw, or some other likely toy: its little, old, black table with flaps, the Bible and pewter ware on the dresser: these form another picture consistent in itself. The dainty *belle* in sacque and slippers, couched on her sofa with waxen candelabra, is another; and the once robust English girl, pinched and crinoletted, with a library novel in her hand and a phial of tonic at her elbow, may be also cited as a consistent scene, and if you admire the latter, why *de gustibus*, &c. But put this smart young lady into the mediæval hall, or even into the cottage or the den;

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put the guttering dip and the squalid Londoners on the satin-clad sofa; put the cottage fire-place and patchwork into the drawing-room; in fact, shift the pieces anyhow out of their natural places, and the result is quite the reverse of picturesque, or even interesting. Beauty along with consistency is off the board.

Emerson says "Consistency is the bugbear of little minds," and that, paradoxical as it may seem, is often true, even of rooms. It is occasionally possible to so completely mingle the old and new elements, the beautiful and ugly things, that they coalesce, and the result is harmony. But this must be regarded as a happy chance, which those who scheme for it must never rely on obtaining—it is much easier to arrive at garish chaos.

Without consistency there is seldom harmony; false lines are painful to those who know right from wrong. The Georgian hoop, only tolerable in a certain *entourage* because we associate them together, is as vile and barbarous an injury to the smooth curves of the normal figure as the vulgar crinolette. What painter, what sculptor would clothe Galatea in so disgusting an excrescence? And if they injure the figure of the wearer, they also injure every good curve in the furniture.

For a room to be really beautiful, nothing carried into it ought to be inconsistent and out of character. Least of all, should the head and crown of all the decoration, the living inhabitants, contradict with false lines, bad colours, inferior materials, and malformations in millinery, the chance beauty that fortune and an architect have given them on the walls.

We may have consistency without beauty, as in the case of the den of thieves; but we cannot have beauty without a certain radical consistency. The fit, the appropriate, the seemly, are integral parts of beauty. And no one can be supposed to understand anything of the laws of beauty, who is capable of contradicting them flatly in her own costume—going out of her way to look ungainly. No quaint china and Liberty silks on her walls can save her, while her presence makes confusion worse confounded.

You must remember that the furniture is a part of your dress; although you don't carry it about, you sit upon it, you are seen against it, it is the outermost-wrappage of the ever-draped and framed and shielded personality. If you bring your modern, milliner-hashed, and ungraceful self into your antique, stately and chastened rooms, into which you would never allow a plebeian or alien object,—frying-pan, old boots, or work of a wrong period—is not the picture, the *ensemble*, as much injured by your presence as by boots and frying-pan? You might as well wear a satin dress with a cloth jacket—wear diamonds and steel together: it is "bad taste." The guest with mind unkempt, who knows nought or cares nought about the laws of beauty in line and

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tint, must indeed sometimes be admitted, if she be worth it. She may be prized for qualities which are above rubies, and even blue china.

Well, Mrs. Fry, with her frumpish bonnet, would be an ornament anywhere: so would Dr. Johnson, though his habits were not cleanly, and he slobbered his shirt-front and spilled his tea; but he was not acceptable because of that, but in spite of it.

Still guests with qualities as admirable as Johnson's and Mrs. Fry's would be none the worse for adopting an inoffensive appearance, and we sigh for the day when, however rich or simple be the reigning fashions, there will be no monstrosities patent and potent enough to seriously annoy others—no farthingales, no waggling and vibrating "dress-improvers," no wasp waists, no foul precipices of hair and grease and meal, no heels four inches high by a quarter of an inch broad, made to prevent walking—

"'Tis the fashion to totter and shew you can fall."

All which horrors have been *à la mode* in England.

But the eye very soon grows vitiated, and the sense of propriety and fitness are lost as soon as the *raison d'être* is forgotten.

It is certain that the whole value of a room as a "setting" to human beings is misunderstood, when the inmates, to whom it is intended to work up, are completely ajar with the scheme of decoration. A background must be subservient to the main subject, whatever that is; and however we adore our rooms we can hardly make ourselves a setting and background for *them*. No wall should be more brilliant than the dresses worn near it: no curtains and sofas should be more richly clad than the company. Shall we mount our tables in pure gold and ourselves wear ornaments of brass? Shall we set the poker with diamonds and twist iron wire round our necks? It is not more unreasonable than what we constantly see—the tables and lamps hung with point lace, whilst the hostess wears imitation: the "worm's winding sheet" kept sacred to the chair-seats, whilst the hostess goes in wool and cotton warp: the delicatest paintings on the tea-cups and the cabinets, and vulgar, ill-cut cameos on the ladies' arms: graceful curves on panels and couches, and coarse, bad curves all over the dresses.

The *raison d'être* of furnishing a room at all is to make it habitable. The *raison d'être* of beautifying a room is to enhance the beauty of the inhabitants, to please the eye in all directions.

Beauty on wall and ceiling, floor and shelf, is well worth having. But a live dog is worth a dead lion, and human beauty is worth at least as much cultivation as its background.

M. E. HAWEIS.

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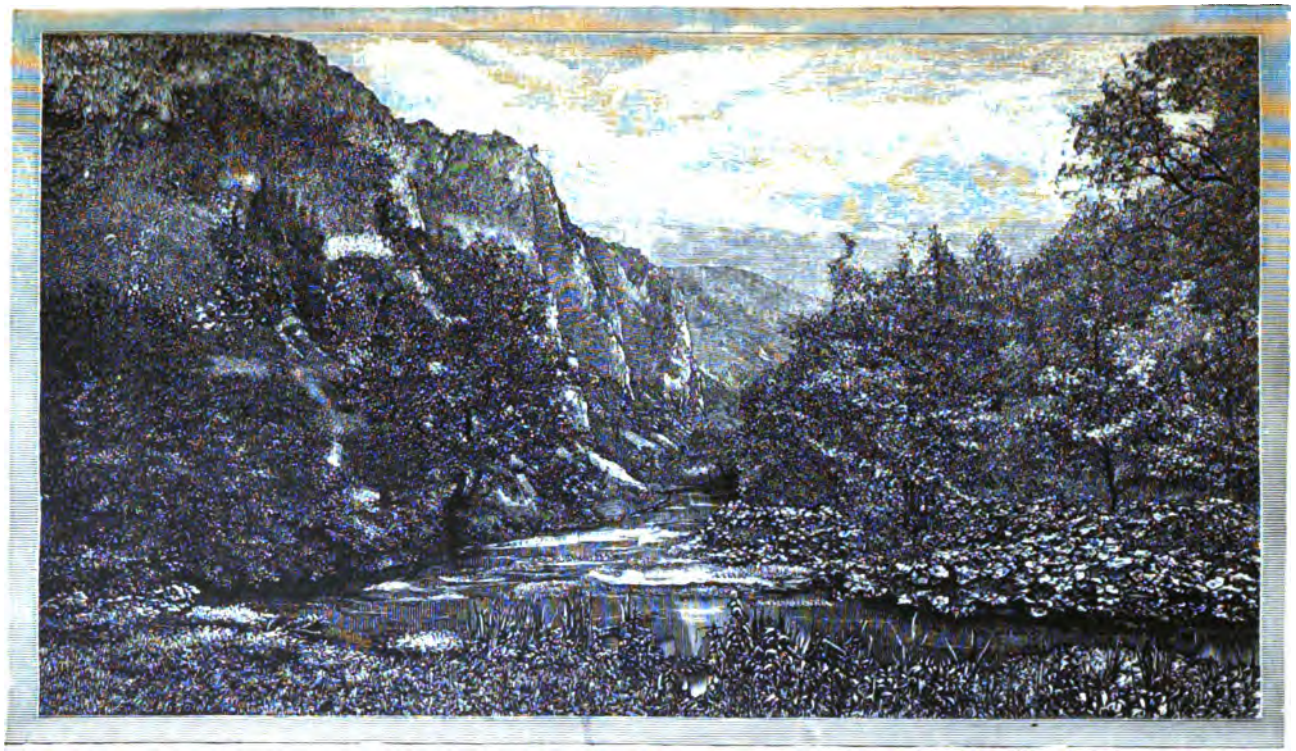

IN DOVE-DALE.—(*See page* 439).

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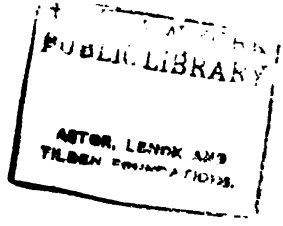

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IN DOVE-DALE.

THOU mountain-guarded stream,
Hasting to hide thee in thy mossy caves,
Here 'mid the flowery knolls of Beresford
Thy babbling music lures the wanderer on
To trace the deckings of thy cradle rare!
Far under many an ivied rampart grey
And towering crag we tread the winding vale.
Anon our feet some rugged path ascend,
Lost in the hawthorn or thick hazel-copse.
Still on we stray. Lo! down the long defile,
New-opening and with gleaming ledges crown'd,
A lightsome glade appears: the crested pile
They name Church-rock o'erhangs the sparkling rill;
While in our sight, along th' opposing hill,
Strange steeple-forms, timeworn, point over point,
Clamber aloft and lift the soul to heaven!
Oh, Nature's Temple, solitary, wild,
Thou hold'st the sense in rapturous wonderment.
How mightier than a hundred master tongues
These rifted spires through silence eloquent.
Imperial Tors, what secrets hold ye fast
Of Time's vast purpose and the weighty throes
Of ages—what of th' untold mysteries
Of our brief life, the which we long to know!
Ah, vaunting thought, why eager thus to scale
Wisdom's steep heights, by dulling vapours cross'd?
Why toils man's spirit restless from its sphere,
Straining to win ambition's airy prize?
Oh, blithe Dale-water, bubbling here below,
Thy guardian cliffs in sweet security,
Might I like thee glide down the vale of life
In blissful shade secluded, envy-free!
Content to pause in innocent delights,
Nor scorn the boon that comes to every lot;
Unruffled save by fancy's fitful gale
Or the light fleeting hindrance of an hour,
As thou, each rocky barrier safely pass'd,
Purling along thy sedges bid'st each heart
Mantle at ease and banish all its woe!

JOSEPH B. DALTON.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A SINGING CHAMBERMAID.

I AM a singing chambermaid! I wonder, gentle reader, if you know what that is! I wonder, also, if you *are* a gentle reader, gentle or simple, or both. Forgive me, whichever you may be, and remember it is my profession to be perky, not to say pert. An old lady whom I met once when touring in Devonshire told me she thought a singing chambermaid must be one—unlike an ordinary one at a hotel—who, having a good voice, was let off some of the more ordinary duties of her situation, so as to be at liberty to sing soothing ditties to children and invalids, or any others who relished being sung to sleep. I don't think much of that old lady's judgment, however, ever since the time when, with infinite trouble, I managed to obtain an order out of a very stingy manager, for her to see me play *Ophelia*, when, after what I considered a most telling performance of the mad scene, I asked her what she thought of it, and she made reply, "Oh, well now! you did look rale luvly *walkin' in yer sleep.*" By this time you will have gathered, oh, most intelligent of readers! that a singing chambermaid is to do with theatres. Right!—it is: being the professional term for a female person who takes that line of character which is generally played in curls and an apron with a bib and pockets, and with very high-heeled shoes, mostly the beloved of the low comedian, who plays the comic men's parts.

Ophelia, I should observe, is not by any means a singing chambermaid. She is a "juvenile," in contradistinction to the *Queen of Denmark*, who is a "heavy lady." I often think how ineffably comic many of our terms must be to the general public.

Having been a singing chambermaid for many years I have hosts of recollections which may or may not be interesting to you. The only bother being that I really don't know where to begin.

Suppose I tell you of a "dry up."

Of course, in common with all people who have acted much in the provinces, I have been in several.

But I'll begin with my first experience of those very hard facts.

First of all, you must know, a "dry up" in our parlance is a failure; thus, if an actor or actress forgets his or her part on the stage and ceases speaking, that is a "dry up," and very unpleasant it is, too, let me tell you.

Some people never do this; if they forget their part, they what

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is called "pong," that is, they go on saying something—and very great nonsense it is, generally—till someone on the stage fills up the gap by striking in, and so keeps the scene together; or sometimes the forgetful one catches a word or two from the prompter, which sets him going all right again.

To old stagers the merest whisper from the prompter will recall their scattered memory, whereas I don't think anything would do a novice good under these circumstances. And it is *not* a nice feeling, when suddenly your mind becomes just like a sheet of blank foolscap and you haven't a notion what comes next, or even what the scene is about, or what you have hitherto been saying, or anything but that it's your turn to speak and you can't, and a cold perspiration breaks out on you, and you have a roaring in your ears, and you feel all the eyes in the house turned on you. Your nose seems to swell and your hands turn red and won't be concealed, and you *know* that your services will be dispensed with next Saturday fortnight. Well, that's one kind of "dry up," but a far worse one is, when a manager fails to pay salaries. Then, "the ghost doesn't walk," that is, there is no treasury on Friday night, or Saturday night, as the case may be, and the result is a "dry up."

Once on a time I was terribly hard up for an engagement, so answered an advertisement in the *Era*, instead of, as usual, waiting until my theatrical agent made an engagement for me. The result was that I arranged to open on a certain date at Quay-ville, a lovely watering place, to play second chambermaids, at the munificent salary of twenty-eight shillings per week.

I was to give a week for rehearsals, and of course find my own wardrobe. I may mention here, that all principal ladies find their own wardrobe; the gentlemen and the ballet being dressed from the wardrobe belonging to the theatre. Things were at a very low ebb with me or I should not have consented to take so low a salary or—worse even than that—play second business. However, needs must when the charioteer has a cloven foot, so I was thankful to get even that just then. I managed (I won't tell you how) to scrape together enough money to pay cab-hire and third-class railway fare, and with the remnant of my wardrobe went down to Quayville, a long, hot, railway journey, but the glimpse of the lovely bay, under a perfect summer sky, I got just before the train steamed into the station, almost freshened me up. I say almost, for it was late in the afternoon; I was dinnerless and tealess, hot and dusty, and most terribly anxious as to getting a good landlady, who would let me "tick" for a fortnight—*i.e.*, a week's rehearsal, and then a week's acting before the first treasury arrived with my twenty-eight shillings.

I found the theatre was a long way from the station, but that the railway people would take my luggage very cheaply; so

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bestowing my last sixpence on the porter who had "seen to" my things, I set out to walk.

Lest you should think me foolish in not keeping my sixpence for the luxury of a 'bus, let me explain that I have met with such invariable kindness and civility from railway men on my many lonely and otherwise unprotected journeys, that I'd go without more important things than 'buses at any time rather than not be able to bestow upon them the modest tip they so well deserve.

Well, I arrived at the theatre, a very third rate one—but theatres often are at watering places—and found a solitary man doing a little carpentering on the stage. He told me most of the company had arrived, and showed me a bill of the play, by which I found all of them were strangers to me; I managed to elicit from him who were married and who were not, who lived together and who were solitary, for I had made up my mind, on the journey down, that I must endeavour to live with some other lady of the company for the sake of cheapness. I found there was only one with whom there was any chance of doing this—the first chambermaid—a Scotch girl, who had arrived the previous day from Glasgow, (third-class fare, about two pounds ten). She was a perfect stranger to me, and lived about a mile and a half from the theatre, a consideration to me in my tired and famished condition; but muttering to myself that "beggars mustn't be choosers," and that "necessity has no manners," I told the carpenter to look after my luggage, should it arrive in my absence, and set forth.

A long walk, all up-hill, under a blazing sun, meeting troops of girls, who evidently toiled not neither did they spin but looked delightfully fresh and cool going down to the sea, with—or to meet—their attendant cavaliers.

Arrived at the end of my walk, I found the Scotch chambermaid exceedingly canny, and by no means inclined to take me under her wing.

It would have been strange if she had, for, though only of the middle height myself, I was a head and shoulders taller than she. I also felt a Satanic satisfaction in observing by her voice in speaking that she couldn't sing, whilst as to dancing, with a figure like that it was a physical impossibility. She had very bad teeth and spoke with a very broad Glasgow accent. As I was to play seconds to her I was vain enough to think I should get the best of it. After some conversation, however, I made arrangements to share apartments with her, and was soon sitting down to some strong tea and a fried sole, the latter a great weakness of mine, whilst as for the former I really don't know what poor hard-worked actresses would do without it.

With my new friend—whose name was Jessie Antowers—I proceeded next morning to a ten o'clock call— *i.e.*, rehearsal, and made the acquaintance of the rest of the company.

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They were rather a shabby lot—not to be wondered at considering the smallness of the salaries—with the exception of the low comedian, who was particularly smart, and an extremely nice lady-like girl, who had come to play walking ladies for twenty-five shillings a week. She was the niece of a well-known physician in Town, but having insisted on taking to the stage as a profession, was now very sensibly learning her business by beginning at the foot of the ladder.

She and I soon became great friends, and as she was very uncomfortable in her lodgings, it was arranged she should give her landlady notice, and come and make a third with Jessie Antowers and myself.

There were, besides those I've mentioned, the heavy man, an Irishman; a couple who called themselves brother and sister, but who were suspected by everyone of being mother and son, they called themselves Lyttelton, she was to play old women, and her brother utility; and a very funny person who had come for old men, he was the ideal of a penny showman, small and fat, with a nose like nothing in the world but a lump of putty with a dab of carmine on it, his name was Evans (pronounced by himself indiscriminately as Heavens and Evvins), but everybody called him "Jimmy;" he was given to wearing a white hat, a loud scarf, and an overcoat—the latter in despite of the great heat, and more, I believe, with the idea of showing the world at large that he possessed one than with any other motive.

The gallant manager of all this talent was (or rather said he was) a Lieutenant Johnson, though what he held his rank in I never heard. His wife was youngish but very jaded, and miserable looking; he was presentable in manners and appearance.

Of course they were to play the leading business; with managers that generally means the best parts in everybody's business.

We rehearsed hard all that week, though myself and the walking lady managed time for some most charming walks with the low comedian and an amateur friend of his, who had joined the company for the sake of practice. Ah! those evenings in the Cockington lanes, I've had a *tendresse* for the name of Frank ever since, though he *was* an amateur.

The second week we also worked very hard. An entire change of performance every evening meant ten o'clock calls every morning, for me at least almost endless sewing, as I had to alter and do up the few dresses I had with me, so as to make them do for the numerous characters I had to assume.

By this time the lessee had allotted or "cast" me, as we should say, all the principal chambermaids, leaving Miss Antowers very much out in the cold, though of course the work for the first week had all been cast before the company met.

We were playing heavy melodramas, which, with our limited

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numbers and still less talent, took a great deal of arranging and doubling of parts.

We were doing moderate business, not very good, but still what we (the company) considered was paying business. It's true the lessee walked about groaning and saying he was losing, but that's one of the playful little ways managers indulge in, so we took no notice beyond thinking it looked hopeful.

He was very pleasant, almost too much so perhaps to some of the ladies, while his wife, poor soul, never spoke a word to any one. I say poor soul! because I was always haunted by an uncomfortable feeling of pity for her, uncomfortable because apparently so uncalled for. One night we were playing "The Octoroon;" this play has a long cast of characters, and we were of course very short of people.

The manager picked up some people in the town, who were glad to be sent on for a trifle of money and the glory of the thing. They had their faces blackened and browned for slaves. They mostly blackened their faces an inch thick and forgot their necks and hands, and so appeared a new race of *piebald* slaves. In the sale scene the scene-shifters and anyone else who could be caught at the last minute were sent on as planters. Of course they were not allowed to speak. And as they hadn't time to wash their faces they were made to walk in and sit down with their backs to the audience.

Frank, the amateur, enacted the Indian *Wah-no-tee*; I played the boy *Paul*.

At the end of the second act, at what I have always thought the most pathetic bit in the play, where the Indian discovers the body of his little playmate, who has been murdered by *M'Closky*, a rather comic, though to me unpleasant, incident occurred. The business of the scene is, that the Indian comes in, discovers *Paul*, half raises him from the ground, then, finding *Paul* is dead and not sleeping, as he imagined, he lays *Paul* down, draws his tomahawk, smashes the photographic apparatus, which he thinks has occasioned the mischief, then he returns to the boy, lifts him right off the ground and the curtain goes down on his sobbing over the body. Some *Wah-no-tees* carry the boy up the stage to give the idea of going to bury him (rather ghastly, don't you think?), but the lifting is always done.

Now, knowing it is an awkward thing to lift a person lying on the floor, particularly a lady, and knowing our *Wah-no-tee* was only an amateur, I wanted him to try it at rehearsal, but being, like most amateurs, over confident, and instead of insisting, as I should have done, I let him have his own way.

At night there was rather a better audience than usual, and our scene went very well. I, lying on the ground, was listening for those premonitory sniffs and apologetic coughs which always means a "touching" scene is going to have a call. *Wah-no-tee*

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leaned over to pick me up. Tried, gasped, put me down, took a long breath and tried again. This time he managed to lift me, but just as he was beginning to wail, "Paul, Paul! weeny Paul!" which should end the act and bring down the drop, my weight proved too much for him, and he not only dropped me heavily on the floor but fell flat over me. Of course the act finished amidst roars of laughter, and I went to my dressing-room sore and indignant.

Poor *Wah-no-tee*, each time he stalked on, wrapped in dignity (and a blanket borrowed from one of his mother's beds), the people laughed at him; they would have none of him, and as *Wah-no-tee* appeared in most other scenes in the play, of course he spoiled them all, and when the curtain went down finally he was well scolded by every one else for spoiling the piece.

At length the wished for Saturday arrived, and everyone turned up fresh and smiling to a ten o'clock call, thinking that treasury would be at the end of rehearsal.

We went steadily on till nearly two, when we finished. We waited about, trying to look as if we didn't expect or want anything in particular. Just as the manager was going out, he remarked, in a calm and casual manner, that treasury would be *after performance.*

As this is most unusual, and is never done at the first treasury after the formation of a company, we looked aghast, and I, with a courage born of desperation, rushed after him, seizing him by the coat-tails just as he was going up the three or four steps leading into the street.

"I beg your pardon," panted I, out of breath with my rapid career round the side of the pit, "I *must* have some money this *morning.*"

"My dear Miss Marsden," he said, with a placid look of reproach at my impetuosity, "I always pay treasury at night."

I was nonplussed; I'd never been situated as then. I had not a penny in the world, I owed my landlady for two weeks' board and lodging, and on Monday we were going to play "Aladdin," and though I had a prince's dress which I could "dodge up," so as to make do for the second dress. I was obliged to get a yard or two of chintz to make a first dress for the part; so, emboldened by my necessities, I told my worthy manager that I must get a dress for the burlesque (which had been put up for my especial shine), and money I must have, if it were only half my salary. He then told me to come round to the theatre at five, when he would give me my salary, and I could do my shopping before dressing for the night's performance. He also took me into his confidence to the extent of saying he should have broken through his rule of never paying salaries till after performance, but that he had taken next to no money during the week we had been open,

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"not nearly enough to pay gas;" and that (as he had not expected such a failure) he was not provided with the money for treasury, but that Mrs. Johnson had gone to her father's (a short railway journey off) to get it, and he expected her back before five. That he looked to the burlesque of next week to pull up the business, aided, as it was, by Miss Marsden's beauty and talent, &c., &c., and so on *ad lib.*

Now, I had never been in a "dry up" before, but to have one's manager talking in this way was too much even for me. An actor's vanity is proverbially large, but well I knew that managers invariably frown down the idea of one's having any talent, thinking they may be asked for a rise of salary if they admit the idea of one's being of the slightest use. So I began to suspect all was not right, and going back to the stage told everyone what the lieutenant had said, leaving out that part about the beauty and talent, &c.; of course we all agreed to come at five o'clock, and equally, of course, we did, *punctually.*

When Jessie and I went home to what should have been our dinner, our landlady asked for her little bill, and when we said treasury wasn't to be till night, she waxed furious, saying she knew we were always paid in the morning, and that unless, when we came home, we brought her a part—if not all—of the money we owed her, she should not allow us to enter, but should retain our luggage: with a lot more in the same strain, finishing up by saying, neither dinner nor tea should we have there till she was paid. This she adhered to, and about half-past four, faint and heartsick as to the result, we went down to the walking lady and begged a cup of tea, but without telling her we were dinnerless. (I didn't know then her mother frequently sent her a surreptitious five pound note, and thought she might be in the same strait with ourselves.)

Punctually at five we assembled on the stage, and a pretty set of woebegone wretches we were. Most of us had come long journeys, and several of us were absolutely penniless.

I had visions of begging a night's shelter at a police station, as I had once heard of an actor who did; being in a strange town, he couldn't find his lodgings, and telling his woes to a passing policeman the latter took him to the station, where he sat round the fire with the men on duty, telling tales and drinking hot coffee. They let him study character too, from the night charges, and he was altogether very comfortable.

I wondered, miserably but vaguely, of how I should get over Sunday, for sure I was our landlady wouldn't let us in without the needful offering.

I think we were all pretty sure the lieutenant wouldn't appear, and so we sat waiting, and watching amateur Frank and his friend the low comedian, who, as they were staying with Frank's relations in the town, could afford to be jolly; and so beguiled the

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time practising broad sword combats, with their walking sticks for weapons, and trying new dancing steps.

At a few minutes before seven (the curtain was to go up at half-past) Lieutenant Johnson came on the stage, saying, in an injured tone of voice, "Ladies and gentlemen, don't you think you ought to be dressing?"

We all looked at each other for a few seconds, then I jumped up and said, "I shall not dress till salaries are paid;" "Nor I," "Nor I," echoed respectively the heavy man and walking lady.

"We none of us shan't," said Jimmy, giving his hat a pat on the crown, and throwing open his overcoat. The lieutenant changed colour; he was evidently taken aback.

"What do you mean?" he said.

"Precisely what we say," answered I, more valiantly than I felt. "If you cannot pay us our salaries we will not play, unless we can take the house on its merits, and divide the proceeds amongst us."

Actors are timid people. If I hadn't been strung up to the point of desperation, and so initiated a split in affairs, there is no doubt we should have done what our worthy manager had counted on, namely, played through the first piece, then—whilst we were playing the after piece, in which neither he nor his wife took any part, they would have disappeared with the money taken at the doors, leaving us to face the creditors.

This (as we afterwards found out) was this worthy person's usual mode of procedure.

However, we stuck to our guns, had the proprietor of the theatre in (fortunately he only lived next door), and explained matters to him. Of course it wouldn't have done for him to have the theatre shut up suddenly when it had been announced to be open for the "season," a very elastic period certainly, still, a season of five nights only would have been very short, and have given the theatre a bad name.

So it was arranged the owner of the theatre should take the money at the door, retaining the rent (for the night only), and handing the rest over to us, who were to divide it according to salaries, for there were one or two people drawing salaries smaller even than mine—the brother and sister, for instance, who were like my unfortunate self, utterly and thoroughly hard up. We were also to keep the theatre open the following week, on the same terms, and for two or three weeks after that if possible. The lieutenant had engaged it for three months *certain*, so it was disengaged. We soon dressed, and the curtain went up only five minutes late.

How we worked to make the pieces go, and between the two plays I went on, and sang a song, responding to the encore by an Irish jig, which is bound to go well on a Saturday night.

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The curtain went down very late, and every one was tired and anxious.

We appointed the heavy man treasurer, and he proceeded to business with the proprietor, whose name was Loving. After paying the rent and a few people in the orchestra (people who lived in Quayville, and *would* be paid every night) the money was shared out. I have forgotten how much it was in the aggregate, but I know I found myself the proud possessor of five shillings and fourpence, whilst Jessie, who was first chambermaid, had five and ninepence; then the walking lady (she was called Maude Vanstone, professionally, her own name is a very well-known one), was to go home with us, having sent on her luggage early in the evening, and she had, besides her share, a whole sovereign, the remains of a real five pound note her mother had sent her on the previous week. So we went home triumphant, or would have done, but for a terrific thunderstorm which raged all the time we were taking our long walk up the hill. Rich as we were, the luxury of a cab was of course out of the question, so we got wet through. However, we found a good fire and a hot supper, and we were too thankful at having a shelter at all to mind a wetting in reaching it. Fancy being homeless on such a night, as we so nearly were, though our landlady said she "was sure someone would lend us the money." She must have had uncommon belief in human nature if she thought that, for we didn't know a soul in the town. However, a good supper, and so to bed.

The next morning, though it was Sunday, we had agreed to meet for the purpose of arranging the week's work, and filling up the parts rendered vacant by the secession—shall we say?—of Lieutenant and Mrs. Johnson. It was settled that the heavy man should take some of the leading parts, whilst the low comedian, who was young and good-looking, should take the others, Jimmy playing the low comedy parts, and myself playing the leading ladies, whilst Jessie Antowers played chambermaids as before; I to play all the principal burlesque parts (which I was already on the bills for); this gave me a long part to study for Monday night, another for Tuesday night, and another, which I had played before, to read up for Wednesday. The burlesque ("Aladdin") was to play for the week; and now came a difficulty as to dresses. Leading parts wanted very different dressing to chambermaids, and I had only a very small portion even of my chambermaid's things with me. A first dress for "Aladdin" I must have, so, as I had to study all day and nearly, or quite, all night for Monday's part, Jimmy volunteered to be searching for an open draper's shop at the abnormal hour of seven on Monday morning to buy the requisite number of yards of chintz. He would then bring it to me to be cut out, and the Lyttletons, who had no fresh study, would make it. The rest of the things I wanted I could partly borrow of the other ladies and

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partly dodge up of my own. One or two members of the company being oligarchs enough to have a little money, some was given to Jimmy for my dress, and we separated.

Monday night's pieces went very well, especially the burlesque; my dress for the latter being finished during the progress of the first piece; and Jessie and I again took home ten shillings between us for our landlady.

Tuesday night we didn't do quite so well, and on Wednesday there was so little money in the house that we put off sharing till Thursday, when Jessie and self took home thirteen shillings and sixpence, Jimmy telling us there would have been nothing in the house but for a "friend of his," who took £5 worth of tickets. "Jimmy's friend," we afterwards found, was a young Scotch doctor, who, having been very ill, was now recruiting his health in Quayville, and whom Jimmy had picked up "promiscuous," as he called it.

At the end of the week, Jessie and I, though living as sparely as we possibly could, were not out of debt. I, indeed, lived principally upon tea, for I had to be up night after night, sometimes lying down for an hour or two after daylight, and often walking down to the bathing machines after a hard night's study, and "swapping" an order for a dip.

The work, to me, was simply dreadful; sewing, studying, rehearsing; acting, day after day, is apt to become monotonous, especially when you are not earning enough by it to pay for the very limited amount of bread and butter you consume.

Everyone was very kind to me, and helped me in every possible way. The Lyttletons doing lots of sewing for me—the brother could sew better than the sister—but of course, no one could do my study for me.

We changed the first piece every night, and I couldn't be let off the afterpiece, as I was the only lady in the company used to playing in burlesque, or who could dance or sing. Please fancy this for a day's work; rehearsal at ten, all the time I was not on the stage rehearsing I was walking up and down in some quiet place studying, or rather trying to cram the words of my part into my head; home between three and four in the afternoon, dresses to look out and arrange, studying all the time; a cup of tea and back to the theatre; dress, play a long part, perhaps changing my dress three or four times; then a burlesque part, with all the weight of the piece on my shoulders, several songs and dances always encored, particularly if I was very done up, for then I always tried my hardest; curtain down about eleven, dress, long walk home, cup of tea—nothing to eat for fear of sleepiness—then walk up and down, up and down, till six or seven the next morning, cramming for the next night's performance.

I had got into such a nervous state that I couldn't sit down and study properly but was compelled to be on the move.

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In addition to the work I have told you, I was—every minute I could possibly manage to be—sewing, making, or altering dresses, and besides all this, I had the certainty that we should not do better business than we were doing, that only the hardest and most unremitting work could keep it even as good as it was, that I was in debt and didn't know how to get out of the town, even if I were fortunate enough to get another engagement, and even if I *could* get an engagement, and *could* manage to raise money to go to it, why, even then, how could I? for we were so weak in ladies, particularly, that my going would necessitate an utter collapse, and, in short, I didn't see the end of it all.

Now if I'd been able to take alcoholic stimulants I might perhaps have kept up a little better. I might, I don't know. But having a mortal horror of anything of the sort, and having very insufficient food I began to get very seedy, I had bad pains in my side and neuralgia and comforts of that description; and it got to be quite a recognised institution of the company that I should, what we called "flop" every night after performance.

I think now, looking back on it all, that these "flops" were simply swoons of exhaustion. I'd keep up till the end of the performance, and then when the curtain went down *I* went down too, quite regularly; so that if there was a call it had to be taken without me. Well! one night the flop was of rather longer duration than usual, and so "Jimmy's friend," as we had taken to calling him, was called behind the scenes, he said the flop was serious (we had thought it rather funny than otherwise), and sent Frank one way and Jimmy another to find an open chemist's shop to get a prescription made up which he had scribbled hurriedly on the back of an envelope.

After he had poured the draught down my throat (which he did out of the bottle, just the same way you physic dogs), he sent his man for a cab, and when I recovered I found myself in all my "make up," wrapped up in shawls and supported by Jessie and Maude, the latter crying bitterly.

Dr. Dunoon was too delicate, knowing the circumstances of the case, to prescribe more nourishment, but the next day a dozen of port and a couple of fowls made their appearance. I know we ought to send them back, but in times of necessity one often does more or less than at other times, and as the plain English of the case was that we were half-starved, being three hearty and hard-working girls, why the fowls were stuffed and roasted, a little of the port drank, and the rest exchanged with the landlady for more solid sustenance.

Dr. Dunoon told us also that he had a pair of grey ponies which were eating their heads off and kicking their stables down for want of work and he should esteem it such a favour if we'd use them. (I found out afterwards that he only jobbed them that

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very day.) So every day after rehearsal the grey ponies were waiting at the door of the theatre.

The struggles Maude and I made to render ourselves respectable for those drives. We had a pair and a half of gloves between us, and one of us would wear the pair whilst the other flourished the one in a nonchalant manner, as though she didn't care about gloves, though she had drawersful lying at home unworn.

I generally wore the pair, partly because every one was awfully kind to me just then—and, as far as possible, I had the best of anything there was going—but more I think because Maude had exceptionably beautiful hands.

The doctor's man drove us, and I remember we asked him to take us to a certain place four or five miles distance from Quayville. After going merrily for two or three miles a turnpike loomed in view. Maude and I gazed in stony horror at the dreadful thing, for of course we hadn't a single halfpenny between us, but it would never do to let down our dignity (bless you we were very *starchy*) by letting John know that. I put my hand into my pocket mechanically, vaguely wondering if I could profess to have come out without my purse, when John leaned over and said:

"I beg your pardon, Miss, but I should get into a hawful row with the doctor if I didn't pay." Ah! the relief! though you, dear reader, who have never been as poor as we poor mummers were can't understand it.

I still studied very hard, though not so hard as before, Dr. Dunoon saying I shall be knocked up completely if I did. So as we still changed the pieces very often I had to rely on the prompter a great deal; we had no regular prompter, but when I was on the stage Frank would take the book and the greatest care of me all through the scene. I remember playing a long "talky" scene (that is, no incidents or action), in which Frank, hidden behind a large chair on the stage, gave me every sentence before I spoke it. He and I were both very proud of that achievement, but I fear it was not "real art."

And so we went on for weeks. I wasn't by any means well and was rather anxious, but still on the whole very happy. Maude, dear girl! not having much work of her own to do, did a great deal of mine, and nursed and tended me with the tenderest care; of course I was not laid up, but I had medicine to take, and to be wrapped up in shawls and kept out of draughts, and lots of things of that sort, which she attended to and *I* should have forgotten. I was a great deal chaffed about Dr. Dunoon and I was rather puzzled about him myself. He was wonderfully kind and attentive, and always to *me*; but somehow I didn't think he meant *me*, and one day I saw him look at Maude when he thought no one saw him—I took all his fruit, and flowers, as well as fowls "and things," with a light heart after that. And when he asked us to go and lunch at a hotel a few miles out of Quayville,

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I was very pleased to say yes, for Maude and self, though I don't do that sort of thing as a rule.

Jimmy looked on at all this with grim disfavour, more than once intimating to me that I was taking away "his friend," and when he heard of the proposed lunch he said he'd "long wished to lunch at that hotel, he'd heard their cold beef and pickles was partickler good." No invitation following this hint, I was rather surprised and a good deal vexed at beholding from the window of the sitting-room at the "Green Cheese," Jimmy with his overcoat on and a flower in his buttonhole, alighting from the top of a bus which ran twice a day between the aforesaid hotel and Quayville. "'Ere you are," says Jimmy, "I thought I should find you hout." Of course he *had* to be asked to come in, and he tied his napkin round his neck like a child's bib, ate peas with his knife, and called the waiter "Sir," till I really thought I *must* get up and shake him. Dr. Dunoon stood it all very well till some Maraschino was brought in with coffee (we called it lunch for the sake of euphony but actors *have* to dine early except on Sundays). I didn't take Maraschino but Jimmy did, lots of it. "Ahem! smiled he, that's the stuff; what d'ye call it?—Maskereeno? Galoptious! Miss Marsden, you don't drink your Maskereeno; I'll drink it for you, I ain't proud," and, taking up a glass that stood by me he emptied it. As his own glass had been filled several times; and as he had also had a lot of drinkables before—principally beer and what he called sherry-wine—my glass was just the last straw, and Jimmy Evans got very "beamy" indeed. The doctor's pony carriage was just then brought round and Jimmy announced his intention of going back to Quayville in that, "just to see us safe." He was refused most firmly, and told—which was true—there was no room; so he toddled (no other word expresses his walk) out, to make his own arrangements for getting back. A short time after we started we overtook, a very little way along the road, Jimmy, on a small donkey. He was quite alone, the donkey had commenced to browse by the wayside, and Jimmy was vainly endeavouring to make him "come up" by shouting at him, and by drumming his sides with his (Jimmy's) heels. The cherished overcoat was covered in dust and dirt of a yet more objectionable kind; Jimmy had evidently "come off," his hat was very far back on his head, and in his arms he carried an enormous cabbage, which he informed me, with a leary wink, he'd bought "ver' cheap." Still he was happy, very happy. He challenged us to a race, but we drove past him, trying loftily to look as if we had never seen him before. As he had to play *Father Tom* in the "Colleen Bawn," that evening, however, it was necessary to get him back to Quayville in good time, so the doctor stopped the first empty cab we met and sent his man back in it to fetch the elated Jimmy and take him to his lodgings, where Dr. Dunoon promised to be waiting with a "pick me up."

That night we were thrown into a flutter by the news of a well-

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known manager being in front, and during the performance he came behind the scenes.

After my second song (I was playing *Eily*) he asked me what my plans were. I told him an "engagement." He asked me "What salary?" I replied, "Five pounds and a 'ben.'" (benefit). "Well, he said," I'll give you four, and pay railway fares for tour of twelve weeks certain, and if I like your acting, as I think I shall, I'll engage you for the winter." I had to go on the stage again then to meet *Danny Mann*, and on coming off I asked him if he'd engage the Lyttletons if I went with him, as my leaving the company would break it up, and I knew they had no engagement to go to. So he went and talked to them, and it ended in his engaging us all three to join him in three weeks' time at Swashton, a town about forty miles from Quayville. I watched him talking to the Lyttletons all the time I was being drowned as *Eily O'Connor*, trying to judge by their faces if the engagement was made, and quite determined if it were not that *I* would not be the first to secede from our jointstock company. However, I was very glad the engagement was settled.

All through the "Colleen Bawn" I was thinking of Maude Vanstone instead of *Eily's* woes. I was quite sure "the doctor" liked her very much, but was it any more than a strong *liking?* She was a dear girl, and I had become far too fond of her to like the idea of her hanging about in an arduous profession, for which, moreover, she had not a particle of talent. She was extremely pretty, a lady, and I thought would make a good wife. So I thought I'd turn match-maker "for this occasion only," and resolved on bold measures. Accordingly I asked the doctor to give me five minutes' conversation on the stage immediately after the fall of the curtain, when I knew everybody would be dressing and we should have it all to ourselves.

I began by thanking him for all his kindness and laughing a little at Jimmy's escapade of the afternoon (Jimmy had played *Father Tom* pretty well, except for an occasional hiccup). Then, in a manner I thought highly diplomatic, I worked round to Maude; then, as I saw his face flush and his eye brighten, I asked him what his intentions were.

I found, as I thought, he was rather undecided, but I speedily helped him to make up his mind, and when I went to change my dress I sent her up on the stage. I wondered if she guessed for what! I don't think so. If she did, she was a better actress off the stage than she was on.

The doctor walked home with us that night, drawing Maude's hand through his arm, and speaking very little. When we went in, Maude refused any supper and went upstairs. I went up. I found her in my room, and with a most beautiful blush on her lovely pink and white face, she told me she was to be married to "him" (only one "him" in the world of course) in a month or

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two, going back to her mother till he got his home in "Bonnie Scotland" ready for her. So you see, dear reader, there were four of us provided with engagements: the Lytteltons, myself, and now Maude.

The next day, at rehearsal, I announced my engagement at Swashton. The heavy man said he had an engagement too. He must leave in a fortnight. He had put off speaking of it till the last moment, for fear of unsettling the company. The low comedian and Frank had friends in Quayville, with whom they would stay till something turned up. Jimmy, sly dog, came out with the news that he had a brother, a farmer, in the country, some nine miles from Quayville, who would be very glad to see him as long as he chose to stay.

So we thought we would go in heavily for the last week or two of our stay in Quayville. We got some big posters, and being now pretty sure of our immediate future, launched out into advertising, with the usual result of much improved business.

The last week we put up my name for a benefit, and as it turned out a very wet evening, when people could not go out on the beach or pier, we had a crowded house, and shared over £5 each, so with the exception of one member of the company, our "dry up at Quayville," turned out all right after all.

That one member was poor Jessie Antowers. She couldn't hold out against the semi-starvation and general wretchedness of our first few weeks on the *sharing system*.

One day, having finished rehearsal before Maude and myself, she left us presumably to go home. When we went home the landlady told us Miss Antowers had come with a gentleman in a cab and taken all her things away. The gentleman waited outside in the cab, and when she had packed up she paid her bill and they drove off together.

Poor Jessie! We didn't know who the *gentleman* could be, but Jessie, in common with the rest of us, had received letters from the gilded youth of Quayville, and we feared it might be the writer of one or other of those letters.

Pity her reader! Sorrow for her, but don't blame her.

Rather throw the blame on the scoundrel who lured us down there, knowing he meant to leave us totally unprovided for, far from our friends and homes, in a strange place, exposed by the very nature of our livelihood to temptations which our more quietly living sisters never know, the mark for every idle or would-be fast man to fly a shaft at.

This Lieutenant Johnson, in less than a month after he had left us, was again advertising for a "company for the season." Very shortly after that he again advertised, and, for all I know, may be still pursuing his nefarious practices, living by swindling a hard-worked profession, and driving weak girls, like our poor Jessie, to sin and sorrow.

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Poor girl, all we could hear of her—and we tried very hard to trace her—was, that she left Quayville the same day she left us. I have never heard of her since.

We had a supper on the stage, and a dance afterwards, the last night of our *season* in Quayville. Mr. Loving was there, and of course the doctor was well to the fore. It was Maude's last night on the stage, henceforth she was to quit Bohemia. The following day I took her over to Swashton—she being now too strictly proper to be allowed to travel alone—whence her mother fetched her in a day or two.

I parted from Quayville with rather an odd mixture of feelings. In spite of hardships and many disagreeables, I had been far from unhappy there. I *almost*—not quite– regretted leaving my landlady, for though she was a *beast*, yet she had one virtue, for she made excellent omelettes.

ABS.

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THE BELLS OF BRYLL.

By the Dead Man's Rill lies Barnard de Bryll,
Slain by Sir Gilbert de Gallowville;
But it was not fairly in knightly strife
That bold Sir Barnard lost his life.

Not steed to steed, and lance to lance,
Matched in the lists, nor by battle's chance;
He was slain by stealth in the hazel grove
As he walked, in the gloaming, to meet with his love.

Only the thrush from her nest hard by,
Save Gallowville, saw Sir Barnard die;
Only the crows that gorged on him
Knew where he lay mid the thickets dim.

Home to his tower Sir Gilbert went,
With his felon deed he was well content—
An ancient debt it was pleasant to pay
In such a quiet and simple way.

And he laughed to himself: "Remorse," said he,
"Will never be likely to trouble me."
But in saying this he happened to make
A very considerable mistake.

For Conscience may sleep, and then, mayhap,
Wake all the brisker for taking a nap;
And straightway handle the man of crime
As if to make up for loss of time.

Thus, that of which he had made so light
Came to the heart of this traitor knight,
And do what he might, beside him still
Seemed the ghastly form of Sir Barnard de Bryll.

Go where he would it was sure to find him,
If he rode, it mounted his steed behind him,
It sat by his side when the board was spread,
It shared his pillow when he was in bed.

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He tumbled and tossed through the midnight hours,
He lost his fine digestive powers;
Some ghostly comfort he needs must find
To give relief to his troubled mind.

Scarce five bow-shots from his tower on the hill
Rose the cloister walls of Our Lady of Bryll.
Thither his course did Sir Gilbert take
His shrift to the Father Abbot to make.

A notable churchman was ruler there
As ever filled an abbatial chair,
Who if not strictly a saint, at least
Was a practical, business-like kind of priest.

With zeal had he laboured to render his shabby
Old church more creditable to his abbey;
And thence, whilst he honoured his saint, he drew
No small self-glorification too.

For between the House of Our Lady of Bryll
And that of St. Tympanum over the hill,
The rivalry had been bitter lately
As to which of the two should be most stately.

Our Abbot of Bryll, with fitting pride,
His choir and his nave had re-edified;
When funds fell short, and he lacked the power
To build a suitable central tower.

Now, when he was told of his visitor's name,
With some hint of the errand on which he came; [mill,
"By the Mass! but this knight shall bring grist to our
We'll do business to-day," quoth the Abbot of Bryll.

Yet some tremors he felt ere the shrift had begun,
Lest the crime should prove but a venial one,
To which no penance he might affix
Beyond furnishing some few hods of bricks.

And the good man's bosom glowed with delight,
When the faltering lips of the penitent knight
Had placed the matter beyond all doubt,
And "the murder," in popular phrase, "was out."

But he looked austere, and he shook his head,
"Murder—and that of a knight!" he said;
"Heavy has been thy crime, my son,
And thy penance must needs be a costly one.

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"Go, build for our church, thy guilt to atone,
A goodly tower of ashlar stone;
Make there five tuneable bells to be—
Myself will furnish the plans, cost free.

"And when that tower shall be builded fair,
And those great bells shall be heard in the air,
The hallowed sound of their chime shall still
The restless sprite of Sir Barnard de Bryll.

"And thou when thou hear'st them o'er valley and hill
Ring, 'Rest to thy spirit, Sir Barnard de Bryll.'
No more shalt lament for the deed thou hast done,
Made free by thy penance, Sir Gilbert, my son."

Up rose the knight, and forth he went,
And the Abbot aloud to his joy gave vent—
"Though St. Tympanum's monks think their church very fine,
They shall not have a tower to compare with mine!"

The good knight, too, as he strode from the door,
Had not known such high spirits for weeks before,
In compounding that debt which imperilled his soul
He had come off lightly, upon the whole.

"For though towers are costly," said he, "I can
Build one as cheaply as any man,
I've a quarry close by which shall furnish the stuff,
And my pay to my serfs shall be little enough.

"Indeed, I should feel inclined to dispose
Of some few more particular foes,
Provided it could be done," he said,
"At as reasonable a rate per head."

To his task with a will, Sir Gilbert went,
And reared up buttress and battlement;
For he thought it long e're the bells should chime,
And he should be perfectly freed from his crime.

'Twas finished at last, that belfry fair,
And its five great bells swung high in the air;
But, alas! when Sir Gilbert heard them peal,
He shook like an aspen from head to heel.

He quivered for anger, he quivered for fear,
For these were the words they clashed in his ear:
"By the Dead Man's Rill lies Barnard de Bryll,
Slain by Sir Gilbert de Gallowville!"

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"A curse on the bells!" Sir Gilbert cried,
"They tell to all what I most would hide.
I am shamed—undone by that tell-tale rhyme;
May the foul fiend crack them, and end their chime!"

Sir Gilbert raved and cursed in vain,
That rhyme was incessantly dinned through his brain,
For the merry monks in their pride and delight
Rang their new bells by day and night.

And dreading ever lest others should hear
What conscience made to himself most clear,
Sir Gilbert fled beyond the sea,
And no man knows where his grave may be.

But the truth of this legend all may know,
Who list by the Abbey of Bryll to go,
For thus speak the bells of St. Mary's still:
"By the Dead Man's Rill lies Barnard de Bryll,
Slain by Sir Gilbert de Gallowville."

F. SCARLETT POTTER.

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WHITBY.

Of all the seaside places of resort that I happen to be acquainted with give me Whitby.

Yes, "quiet, cosy, quaint old Whitby," I say to myself, as am I contentedly pacing its yellow sands; and they *are sands*, not shingles christened so by that prevaricating and dictatorial old dame—Custom. Here you have miles of beach gleaming and glistening in the sunlight as far as the eye can see. Ah! you would not know me now in my changed condition. My face no longer wears its usual pale cast of thought, but boasts instead the healthiest of brown tans. That severe and dignified city suit of mine has given place to a loose, rollicking, devil-may-care one of blue serge. My polished boots—those creaking terrors to nervous clerks—are banished for a pair of careless canvas shoes. The immaculate shirt and solemn neckerchief, so formal and precise in their adjustment, have abdicated in favour of others of a more Byronic nature, while that fearful penalty of respectability, a tall hat, has merged into a comfortable broad-brimmed straw. In fact, altogether there is an artistic Bohemian air about me that would indeed create wonder if seen in the locality of the Bank or the Stock Exchange.

Whitby is divided into two parts, the old and new town. The old town is a quiet place, which, having reached a grey-haired kind of maturity, is now content to yawn the rest of its existence away in sleepy indifference, quite satisfied to know that its married and settled offspring, so to speak, on the other side of the water, is creeping into fashion and marching with the times. Most of its dwellings are gabled oddities, huddled together in picturesque confusion. Some of a less sociable nature stand aloof, shrinking away in morose solitude, as it were, while others in a high state of detached importance seem to swell out with an unmistakeable air of corpulent importance. There is no bustle, no noise, save now and again the drowsy hum of voices mingling with a sluggish traffic. It has no wish to change its way of life, but calmly nestles between those huge cliffs, droning away the time in paying taxes, and earning a from hand-to-mouth kind of living through the produce of its fishing resources and the manufacture of its famous jet ornaments.

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Climbing a winding ascent, I reach the top and find a magnificent width of space overlooking the sea. My form expands as I inhale the fresh pure air; the sea breeze flutters around me like an invisible fan, and when I move it circles about me as if it would keep me locked in its airy embrace and bear me away on its rustling wings—so light and buoyant do I feel! Look which way I will the view is charming. The grass is strewn with fishing nets spread out to dry, while those already dried are gathered up in higgledy-piggledy coils ready to cart away, looking in their confused state like so many tangled cobwebs. There is the Abbey of St. Hilda, now a grand old ruin, with its hoary walls, columns, and broken arches, covered here and there with moss, or half hidden with long trailing curtains of ivy. From the rising inland the distant woods shoot their green glances at me from out the golden fretwork of a mid-day sun. Stretching along the coast in rugged grandeur are shoals of rocks, whose ribs splinter the aggressive waves into endless fragments of spray. Far out at sea the steamers go panting to and fro; the fishing craft are scattered about and so dwarfed by distance that their tiny sails give the boats all the appearance of a flock of seagulls on the wing. To complete the picture, below me lies the harbour, looking with its forest of masts, rigging, and its dilapidated old-fashioned quay-sides, dotted here and there with picturesque dwellings, like the approach to some quaint old continental seaport.

A descent of the path and a walk over the bridge and I am in the new town.

Here the change is marvellous. The shops and houses are more fashionable in their bearing, and show themselves like courtly, well-bred buildings. Unlike its venerable parent of the east side, the west town has kept pace with the progress of the times, hence so many stately hotels and inviting dwellings ever ready to welcome you. There are grand terraces with green slopes and miniature gardens in front, while plenty of cosy cottages lie snugly scattered about at the feet of this pleasant mound, as they peep out from their little foliage bowers. When tired of the pier and promenade, I find along the banks of the winding Esk plenty of inland scenery to refresh me. Of course I am prepared to admit that Miss West Cliff having set up as a seaside kind of coquette, she has developed the ordinary traits and artifices of her numerous sisterhood, though in a less degree I must say than the rest of her apartment-letting sex. During the winter the West Cliff sinks into a sort of stupor and sleeps away the months as soundly as if it had taken an overdose of chloroform. Nothing can rouse it when once it has lapsed into this drugged state; entertainments, be they never so good, depart almost as quickly as they come, for the only signs of life the place exhibits are shown in a sort of convulsive throb every now and again as if the town were afflicted with nightmare. But once let the first rays of a summer sun

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appear, the troubled dream is over; those sleepy eye-lids are duly rubbed, the hive bursts into life, and the human bees begin to buzz about, ever ready to improve the shining hour and look upon the visitors as lawful flowers from which to gather that much-coveted kind of honey known as minted gold. Here is the usual crescent of white and lordly houses, with the usual green verandahs, half-circling a bright space of well-kept turf, in the centre of which is a music saloon, with the usual band not more than usually out of tune. Here are seen the picturesque colours of gay dresses, stretching away down to and along the shore, while may be heard the laughter of happy childhood, as it paddles in the foam of exhausted waves, or builds in innocent glee those wondrous little castles of sand. The bathing machines, with their amphibious horses and attendants, are doing a roaring trade, while the pleasure boats are rocked to and fro till they look like so many tiny cradles drifting out to sea.

I am fortunate in my lodgings. It is a large cottage whose walls and windows are clustered around with ivy and a welcome mixture of rose trees; the thatched roof is lighted up with streaks of grey moss. There is a trim little garden too, with baby walks embroidered with dainty pink and white shells shaped like fans. One corner is completely filled up with a majestic flag-staff, which from my window has all the appearance of a rigged mast with a vane on the top. Toy boats of all shapes and sizes are plentifully scattered about, for my landlord is a retired boatman, who loves to show the fondness he yet cherishes for his former calling; and so he surrounds himself with nautical ornaments of all kinds. A short stroll down the slope and I am on the sands, ensconced in a cosy inlet, overshadowed, so to speak, by a natural umbrella of crag and tangled bushes. Here I can lie in all the luxury of idleness, reclining on my sandy couch, throwing shells and pebbles aimlessly, or watching from under the awning of my tip-tilted hat the clouds of smoke curling upwards from my pipe. London, with the perpetual roar of its husky throat, its opposing streams of traffic in a chronic state of whirlpool, its dingy offices, its high stools and desks, its ledgers, whose grim columns suggest the idea of their being haunted by the ghosts of thousands of headaches, is nothing more to me now than a feverish dream—a half-forgotten nightmare. So I lie on, forgetting and forgot, as I watch each broken wave, with its tips of foam covering the shore with amorous kisses, and listen listlessly to the drowsy hum of distant voices blended with occasional strains of faint music. In fact so novel is my present position, and so welcome the suddenness and charm of my solitude, that my mind at times evinces a tendency to merge into that state of ecstatic blankness which is supposed to characterise that jolly young waterman, as he rowed along just thinking of nothing at all!

I do not mean to say that this dreamy quietude is never

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broken in upon; there are days, though very seldom, when we are over-run with an influx of "trippers;" that is to say, those who come by cheap railway excursions from distant towns; people whose livelihood lies in the bowels of the earth, and who grub and mole through a life which is one long perpetual night; people, the better part of whose existence is spent amidst the hot breath belched from the mouths of roaring furnaces; people from all kinds of haunts where artistic and muscular industry are to be found, come in motley hordes, with sweethearts, wives, and children, eager to brace themselves up with as much fresh and pure sea-air as can possibly be obtained in half a day. And what a sight to see these motley pilgrims let loose from their smoky towns! They infest the rocks, people the sands; they inundate, as it were, the very water itself. They startle quiet taverns, they half kill with mistaken kindness the few stray nigger minstrels of the place, they hold noisy pic-nics in the most unexpected spots. No part is private to them; they climb, they squabble, they try to sing—whether they can or not—till the air is heavy with inharmonious choruses. They dance in higgledy-piggledy groups to the fearful sounds of a hundred local concertinas. Having tried everything and been everywhere, they crowd the decks of the *Seagull* and *Petrel* for a two hours' sail, and away they go to more local music and a perfect Babel of laughter and chatter; and I watch the boats dipping pleasantly as they glide out to sea. But the return. Ah! Those seductive-looking waves have deceived them, for those lovely little wreaths of foam sporting and dancing in the sunlight were only a snare, and covered a ground swell! No sounds of laughter herald the coming back, no dozen or so of unpremeditated glees are now going on at the same time. The concertinas are mute, that awful swell has killed their mirth; they return blanched and white, like so many corpses scattered about in helpless heaps, and you might bury them when and how you like for all they care about the matter now. Poor wretches, it it will be days before thy recover the shock of that deluding sea-trip!

How I have enjoyed myself is notable in my changed appearance; the fresh air has braced up my frame and swept away with its soothing breath the premature wrinkles from my brow. The sun has tanned my face, hands and neck, till I have more the appearance of a creole than that of a Cockney citizen. I have made inland excursions; I have followed the Esk in its pleasant windings through all kinds of rugged and sylvan scenery. I have been to Runswick, with its oddly-built houses and cottages ranged in tiers on the cliff, with only rough winding pathways communicating between them, which gives the village quite a picturesque and alpine appearance. I have also, among many other places of interest, been to Robin Hood's Bay, one of the prettiest of its kind. My visit to the "Beggars' Bridge" recalled to my recol-

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lection a scrap of romance, concerning the rare old arch which spans the stream :—

"Exhausted he climbed the steep side of the brae,
And looked up the dale ere he turned him away
Ah! from her far window a light flickered dim,
And he knew she was faithfully watching for him.

"If fortune ever favour me,
St. Hilda hear my vow!
No lover again, in my native plain,
Shall be thwarted as I am now,
One day I'll come back to claim my bride,
As a worthy and wealthy man,
And my well-earned gold shall raise a bridge,
Across the torrent's span!

"The rover came back from a far distant land,
And he claimed of the maiden her long-promised hand,
But he built, ere he won her, the bridge of his vow
And the lovers of Egton pass over it now."

Though why it should be called "Beggars' Bridge" no one seems to know; the legend certainly suggests "Lovers' Bridge" as a more fitting title. This and much more I learn as I drift along the coast under the guidance of that patriarchal mariner, my landlord, who is a living edition of the history of his native place. But his chat about the Abbey interests me most. Of course the ruin of East Cliff has a legend. I know it, as I had to listen to it any time we came near or passed it. St. Hilda, the abbess, on discovering a plague of serpents, small but venomous—so my landlord said—undertook to rival St. Patrick, for she drove the objectionable reptiles so effectively and hurriedly over the cliff, that in falling on the rocks beneath they one and all broke their necks, and were by some unknown process buried headless in the rocks. Sir Walter Scott says, in writing of "high Whitby's cloistered pile":

"And how of thousands snakes each one,
Was changed into a coil of stone
When holy Hilda pray'd—
Themselves within their holy bound
Their stony folds had often found."

If I smile at this, when he repeats his oft-told tale, he simply points to the said rocks, where dozens of visitors are busily employed with small hammer and chisel, eagerly digging these amputated fossils from their stone beds, wherein for ages they have lain curled up in the shape of rams' horns. So small do these ammonites run, that not only are they made into broaches, but even are they set in rings and breast pins! The Abbey and all its surroundings have, even to the most matter-of-fact visitor, a sort of fascination. My landlord regards the place with all an old

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sailor's superstitious awe, and firmly believes the many weird stories told of St. Hilda, aye, even to the one where her ghost was supposed to appear at a certain window, contrary to the usual habit of ordinary ghosts, *by day* as well as night! If any foolish sceptic dare to doubt the truth of this, he at once recites the old rhyme as a substantial and convincing proof:

"Also a window there I placed,
That you might see me, as undress'd
In morning gown and night trail there,
All the day long fairly appear.
At the west end of the church you'll see
Nine paces there in each degree;
But if one foot you stir aside
My comely presence is deny'd."

There is another tradition which tells of "three barons bold, who irreverently slew a holy hermit, and for this sacrilege they were condemned, both for themselves and their heirs, to do a yearly penance." Sir Walter Scott has utilised the story in his "Marmion":

"Then Whitby's nuns exulting told,
How to their house three Barons bold
Must menial service do,
While horns blow out a note of shame,
And monks cry 'Fye upon your name,
In wrath, for loss of sylvan game
St. Hilda's priest ye slew.'"

But there my term of leave is over. Our little boat must furl its sail and lie up in ordinary till another visitor shall come; the friendly telescope, which I have half worn out, is put aside, and my field glasses packed away, for the clamour of business has reached my quiet nook. But as I go forth once more to the bleaching drudgery of city life, I feel that I have returned a better man, physically in every way than when I started, while the incidents of my Whitby trip will be a long while before they are effaced from my recollection.

HAL LOUTHER.

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EARTHQUAKES AND THEIR CAUSES.

EARTHQUAKES have been described as the most awful and appalling of all natural phenomena. Though to the justness of this description we should probably be willing at any time to assent, it has received, of late, new and lamentable illustration in the destruction two months ago of the beautiful town of Casamicciola, and still more lately in the terrific outburst at Java, which resulted in a far greater loss of human life, a loss which probably has not yet been computed with any approach to accuracy. Under these circumstances we are induced to recall to the memory of our readers a few facts in the history of volcanic phenomena, and also to present some considerations with regard to their causes, which, if they do not entirely remove the mystery pertaining to these dread phenomena, may yet serve to show that we are at least somewhat nearer the true solution than the ancients, who found an adequate cause in the uneasy movement of the Titans; or than the Chinese and Japanese, who respectively attributed earthquakes to the movement of a great subterranean dragon, or of an earth-supporting tortoise, or to the flapping of the tail of some stupendous whale.

As the number of recorded earthquakes amounts to several thousands, it would be of course impossible within the limits of this article even to give a catalogue of them. It may be sufficient to give some brief details with regard to a few, which for one cause or other are especially noteworthy, and then to touch on the history of earthquakes in England.

When the subject is mentioned, there is probably no earthquake which will so readily suggest itself to the mind of an educated reader as that which occurred at Lisbon, on the morning of the first of November, 1755. This great catastrophe was described by the Rev. Charles Davy, who was in Lisbon at the time, and who gave an account of his experience in a letter under date of November 13. He says that he was sitting at a table finishing a letter between nine and ten, when suddenly the table and his papers began to tremble with a gentle motion. Then the whole house began to shake to the foundation, followed in less than a minute by "a strange frightful kind of noise under ground, resembling the hollow distant rumbling of thunder." After a momentary pause he was "stunned with a most horrid crash, as if every edifice in the city had tumbled down at once," the upper

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part of his own house falling with the shock, and though the room in which he was did not then fall, "yet," he says, "everything was thrown out of its place in such a manner that it was with no small difficulty I kept my feet, and expected nothing less than to be soon crushed to death, as the walls continued rocking to and fro in the frightfullest manner, opening in several places. To add to this terrifying scene, the sky in a moment became so gloomy, that I could now distinguish no particular object; it was an Ægyptian darkness indeed, such as might be felt." The gloom dispersing a little, he saw on the floor of his room a woman with an infant in her arms, who, he concluded, had run in for shelter from the falling stones. The poor woman in the utmost agony asked whether he did not think the world had come to an end, and begged for a little drink, complaining of being choked. Going to a closet where had been a large jar of water, he found the jar smashed, and, therefore, told the woman that she must think, not of quenching her thirst, but of saving her life, as a second shock would infallibly bring down what remained of the house on her head. Without stopping even to dress himself fully, he sallied forth, the woman holding him by the arm. Requiring the use of his hands to help him in getting over a heap of ruins, he asked the woman to let go, for the time, her hold, she remaining, however, only two or three feet behind. At this moment a huge stone fell from a tottering wall, and crushed both the woman and her child. "So dismal a spectacle," he says, "at any other time would have afflicted me to the highest degree, but the dread I was in of sharing the same fate myself, and the many instances of the same kind which presented themselves all around, were too shocking to make me dwell a moment on this single object." Destruction seemed so imminent that he hoped he might be killed at once outright, and not survive to linger and perish miserably with one or more of his limbs broken, a wretched condition in which he saw sufferers lying unheeded around him. Climbing over the ruins of St. Paul's church, which had fallen a few minutes before, and under which a great part of the congregation lay buried, he reached the river's side, where there was a vast and most miscellaneous concourse of people, canons in their purple robes and rochets, priests who had run from the altars in their sacerdotal vestments, ladies half-dressed, and some without shoes, all "on their knees at prayers, with the terrors of death in their countenances, every one striking his breast, and crying out incessantly, *Miserecordia meu Dios.*" In the midst of these devotions a second shock came, which completed the ruin of the buildings already shattered, and which was so violent that it was scarcely possible for the worshippers to keep on their knees. Then it was that a "circumstance still more dreadful than the former occurred." This was the incoming of the so-called "tidal-wave," of which, in relation to the Java catastrophe, we have

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lately heard so much. The river, here four miles broad, was "heaving and swelling in a most unaccountable manner, as no wind was stirring; in an instant there appeared at some small distance a large body of water rising as if it were like a mountain, it came on foaming and roaring, and rushed towards the shore with such impetuosity that we all immediately ran for our lives as fast as possible; many were actually swept away, and the rest above their waist in water at a good distance from the banks." He had "the narrowest escape," and was saved only by grasping a large beam, which stayed him till the water returned. It was then that the new marble quay, with thousands of people upon it, who had gone there for refuge, sank into an abyss in the river, leaving not the slightest trace behind, but sucking down with it, as in a whirlpool, a great number of boats and small vessels, all likewise full of people who had hoped in vain thus to find security. Others shocks followed, accompanied by successive burstings in of the sea and river.

Anxious to ascertain the fate of a friend, Mr. Davy pursued his way along a steep and narrow street, where nothing was to be heard but sighs and groans, and where almost every step had to be taken over the bodies of the dead or dying. In some places lay coaches, with their masters, horses, and riders, ladies richly dressed, priests, friars, gentlemen, mechanics, some crushed and just expiring; others with their backs or thighs broken. Some lay almost buried in rubbish, and crying out in vain to the passengers for succour—they were left to perish. The house where his friend had resided had been, however, thrown down. Eventually he found a public-house still standing, and here he took up his quarters with a good many other English and Portuguese, if indeed he could be said to take up his quarters, when he was compelled to sleep out of doors on the ground, with scarcely any covering to protect him from the keen November air.

But as soon as it grew dark, that common accompaniment of earthquakes presented itself, extensive conflagrations, for which it is not necessary to seek any other cause than the lights and fires which had been burning in the houses and churches shaken or overthrown. The city was on fire in a hundred places at once, causing a blaze so bright that one could easily see to read. The fire went on for days together, consuming what the earthquake had spared.

A few days after the earthquake, when the first consternation was somewhat abated, Mr. Davy endeavoured in vain to find even the site of the house where he had lived. And when he did discover it, it was but to ascertain that all his belongings had perished in the fire. But in the search he suffered so severely from the intolerable stench caused by dead bodies lying among the ruins that he nearly fainted; and the result was a fever by which his life was endangered.

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As to the number of those who perished, "it is supposed," he says, "on the lowest calculation, to amount to more than sixty thousand; and though the damage in other respects cannot be computed, yet you may form some idea of it, when I assure you that this extensive and opulent city is now nothing but a vast heap of ruins, that the rich and poor are at present upon a level, some thousands of families, which but the day before had been easy in their circumstances, being now scattered about in the fields, wanting every conveniency of life, and finding none able to relieve them."

These few details may enable the reader to form some opinion as to the justness of the statement, that, of all natural phenomena, earthquakes are the most awful and appalling.

Some forty years subsequently to the Lisbon earthquake occurred the great catastrophe at Riobamba, in Quito, of which A. Von Humboldt mentioned the following phenomena: "Fissures which alternately opened and closed again, so that men saved themselves by extending both arms in order to prevent their sinking; the disappearance of entire caravans of riders or loaded mules, some of which disappeared through transverse fissures suddenly opening in their path, whilst others flying back escaped the danger; such violent oscillations of neighbouring portions of the ground, that people standing upon the choir of a church, at a height of more than twelve feet, got upon the pavement of the street without falling; the sinking of massive houses, in which the inhabitants could open inner doors, and, for two whole days before they were released by excavations, passed uninjured from room to room, procured lights, fed upon supplies accidentally discovered, and disputed with each other regarding the probability of their rescue." Don José Cavanilles has related that in connection with this earthquake, from clefts in the mountains there issued forth an immense volume of fetid water (that is, no doubt, water impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen) which filled spacious valleys, covering both buildings and their inhabitants, stopping the mouths of springs of water, and, in a few days, drying into an earthy and very hard paste, and that in such quantity as to intercept the course of rivers, for eighty-seven days preventing their flow, and in consequence converting into lakes land which had been previously dry.

Space will not allow us to do more than mention the earthquake in Calabria, the successive shocks of which lasted from 1783 to 1786, and concerning which many interesting facts are recorded; the earthquake of Chili in 1822, accompanied by upheaval of the coast to a large extent, involving, says Sir John Herschel, even the uplifting of the Andes, and including the upheaval of the gigantic mass of Aconcagua; or that of New Madrid, in Missouri, when a cemetery was precipitated into the Mississippi; or the catastrophe of Sumbawa, in 1815, attended by most remarkable

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phenomena, and by the loss of not less than 12,000 lives. We must devote a few lines to give some account of the earthquakes which have occurred in Great Britain.

Some persons may possibly be inclined to think that Great Britain has been altogether exempt from earthquakes. But such an opinion would certainly be mistaken. A writer in the *Quarterly Review* (January, 1869) gives 151 as having taken place from the tenth to the eighteenth centuries inclusive. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, if the accounts which have reached us are to be trusted, some remarkable earthquakes occurred. In 1158 the Thames is said to have been laid dry, so as to be passed on foot. And twenty-one years later, ground belonging to the Bishop of Durham, near Darlington, was elevated like a hill at nine in the morning, and so continued till sunset, when it sank, leaving a deep cavity. On other occasions buildings were damaged, and landslips more or less extensive are said to have occurred. On the 6th of April, 1580, at six in the evening, "London and all England were thrown into consternation. The great bell at Westminster sounded the alarm, and was followed by others; the students of the Temple started up from table, and rushed into the street, knives in hand; a part of the Temple church fell, and stones dropped from St. Paul's. Two stones fell in Christ's Church, and crushed two persons—one to an immediate, the other to a lingering death; in rushing out of the church many persons were lamed, and there was a 'shower of chimneys' in the street." Fears were entertained of a repetition of the shock; and it was at this time that two wags are said to have amused themselves in the early morning, by waking the sleepy Londoners, announcing the hour, "Half-past four, *and a dreadful earthquake.*" On February 8th, 1750, there was an earthquake in London, followed by one still more violent a month later. Moreover, a certain dragoon prophesied that, on the 4th of the following month, London and Westminster would be destroyed by an earthquake between twelve and one o'clock at night. On the night predicted of course no earthquake occurred, but affrighted multitudes filled the open places; and it was on this occasion that Whitefield preached at midnight in Hyde Park. We must, however, close our account of British earthquakes, merely alluding to the remarkable fact that slight earth-tremors are of frequent occurrence at the town of Comrie, in the centre of Perthshire.

The outbursts of the earth's inner energy which have just been mentioned—and still more, at the present time, the catastrophes which have occurred within the last two months—invest with great interest the question relating to the causes of earthquakes. M. Renan was recently reported to have said that a hundred years hence mankind will occupy themselves with physical science, and will care little or nothing for their past history and its monuments. On the other hand, to Professor Huxley, if we recollect rightly,

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has been attributed the opinion that science is rapidly exhausting all available problems. Whatever may be true with regard to M. Renan's prophecy, we incline to think that even in the year 1983 the "researcher" will be able to find some unsolved problems whose solution is yet not altogether beyond human power. But the question relating to the causes of earthquakes seems to be one of those secrets of which nature almost promises the disclosure, if she is skilfully and persistently wooed. Though the problem remains unsolved, yet the solution seems to lie not very far beyond our grasp; and very probably it may be in the main attained a good while before another century has passed away. We already know a good deal about the matter. The probability of an intimate general connection between earthquakes and volcanoes has been long recognised; earthquakes occurring when neighbouring volcanoes have become temporarily quieted, or, as recently in Java, accompanying an unusually fierce volcanic outburst. Volcanoes have been spoken of as safety-valves; and in the former case it may be supposed that the valve has become clogged and obstructed; so that explosion and disruption is the necessary consequence. In the latter case, when an energetic display from one or more volcanoes occurs together with the earthquake, it may be concluded that the vents or "safety-valves" supply an insufficient outlet.

Again, it is a well-ascertained fact that with rare, and to some extent doubtful, exceptions, volcanoes are found contiguous to the sea, or at no very great distance therefrom; and this has been generally true of the more violent earthquakes. Moreover, a large proportion of existing volcanoes occur in lines stretching from north to south, though with some irregularity, influenced apparently by the shape of the great continents. One of these lines extends along the Western coasts of America, occurring in or associated with the enormously long mountainous range known as the Rocky Mountains in North America and the Andes in the South. Some of these volcanoes are, it is true, not quite close to the sea, but, as has been observed, they form part of a series whose extremity is near the ocean. Jorullo, in Mexico, has been instanced as one of these—a volcano which had its origin so recently as 1759, in a district which had been previously occupied by fertile fields of sugar-cane and indigo.

Another volcanic series takes its origin in the peninsula of Kamtschatka, where there is the great volcano of Kliutchevsk, then bordering Asia, it passes through the chain of the Kurile Islands, through Japan, with its perennial earthquakes, and its renowned sacred volcano, Fusi Yama, through Formosa, the Philippines and Moluccas. Here the Asiatic line divides apparently into two branches, one, it should be noted, still keeping in some sort to the Asiatic coast-line, passes westward through Sumbawa, Java, with its "rookery of volcanoes," and into the Bay

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of Bengal. The other branch, of which the indications are more sparse, is apparently bent to the east by the Australian continent, and then resumes a generally southern direction, passing through New Zealand, and particularly the northern island, and then still on to the southward to Mount Erebus far toward the South Pole.

The Asiatic and American volcanic series are linked together at the north by the Aleutian Islands with their frequent volcanoes. And there are also traces, though somewhat more scattered, of a line of volcanic action passing from Jan Mayen and Hecla in Iceland to the south, through the Atlantic. If, as has been suggested, there is a line of volcanic energy running from east to west through Central Asia, such a line may connect the chain of volcanoes bordering Eastern Asia with the volcanic district of Naples and the Mediterranean. Such a Central Asiatic line would not now, it is true, be contiguous to any sea or ocean. But an objection based on this ground is at least partially met by the hypothesis of a formerly existing sea. But whether there is, or is not, a volcanic tract passing through Central or through Southern Asia, the outburst at Java, followed with so short an interval the earthquake at Ischia and the destruction of Casamicciola, as to render some hidden connection far from impossible.

Are volcanic phenomena caused by very deep-seated igneous forces (forces which are, perhaps, just now in unusual activity) causing explosions, shocks, and vibrations which, when they reach the surface, are felt most severely at the weakest points? Such an explanation would suit very well the wide extent of the earth's surface, which was shaken and perturbed by the great Lisbon earthquake. The area of influence extended to the north so far as Norway, Sweden, and the Baltic, across the Atlantic to Canada and the West Indies, and south to Morocco, where the earth opened and swallowed up a town with eight or ten thousand inhabitants. But it is clear that volcanic energy is, as just now stated, exerted to a great extent along certain superficial lines of outburst, a fact which does not suit very well the idea of force radiating from the centre of the earth. And it has been alleged, though not perhaps quite conclusively proved, that there are no sufficient grounds for supposing that volcanic and earthquake forces proceed from points deeper than thirty miles from the surface. This question is intimately associated with that relating to the nature of the earth's inner mass. It was for a long time proclaimed that the earth is a mass of molten matter, with its surface cooled into a slight and thin solid rind—slight and thin, that is, as compared with the 8,000 miles of the earth's diameter. But scientists are now unwilling to admit that such is the earth's constitution. No doubt in mines the heat becomes more intense in proportion to the depth, though the ratio of increased temperature is not quite uniform and invariable. But the general ratio of increase cannot, it is said, be maintained down to the earth's centre. Otherwise the central

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heat would become so intense as to render the existence of any solid superficial crust quite impossible. Moreover, in its course through space, subjected as it is in varying degrees to attraction from the sun and moon, the earth displays a rigidity inconsistent with the idea of its being essentially molten or fluid. And the facts disclosed by geological research show that the conditions of the earth's surface have long possessed a measure of stability inconsistent with the idea of the interior mass being essentially fluid. But if this theory of the earth's interior is rejected, we must also abandon an explanation of volcanoes and earthquakes which seemed formerly to possess a good deal of probability. The explanation alluded to supposed that volcanic eruptions and earthquake disturbances were caused by the sea obtaining from time to time access to the highly-heated rocks beneath, or even to the subjacent liquefied mass and molten lava. By contact therewith the sea-water would become transformed into steam and explosive gases. But if we abandon the explanation of volcanoes and earthquakes, which finds their origin exclusively in the sea obtaining access to a central highly-heated and molten mass, this abandonment by no means involves a denial of the position that volcanic phenomena have some close relation to the sea. The existence in general of such a relation is rendered almost certain by the facts already mentioned. And frequently, at least, such gases are evolved in volcanic outbursts as would be produced by the decomposition of the water of the sea.

Another explanation seeks the cause of these phenomena in the fact that some bodies will absorb many times their volume of certain gases—an absorption which, as Professor Judd remarks in his recent work on Volcanoes (1881), sometimes "takes place only at high temperatures. Thus silver in a state of fusion is able to absorb 22 times its volume of oxygen gas. When the metal is allowed to cool this gas is given off, and if the cooling takes place suddenly a crust is formed on the surface, and the phenomenon known as the 'spitting of silver' is exhibited. Sometimes, during this operation, miniature cones and lava-streams are formed on the surface of the cooling mass, which present a striking resemblance to those formed on a grand scale upon the surface of the globe." Professor Judd, who on this subject is a high living authority, proceeds to show that similar phenomena are presented in the case of molten sulphur; and he maintains that the enormous volume of gases given off during volcanic outbursts can only be accounted for by supposing that the masses of fluid rock had previously absorbed many times their volume of gases. And he concludes that it is to the violent escape of these imprisoned gases, as the pressure on the molten rock masses is relieved, "that nearly all the active phenomena of volcanoes must be referred; and it was the recognition of this fact by Spallanzani, while he was watching the phenomena displayed in the crater of Stromboli,

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which laid the foundations of the science of Vulcanology."[1] But if it is admitted that the sudden liberation of gases which had been by absorption held in imprisonment, and their exerting prodigious force as they resume their former volume, would account for the upheaval and rending of the earth in earthquakes, and for the violence of volcanic discharges, all difficulty is not thus cleared up. How and when the gases become absorbed are questions not easily answered.

Sir Humphrey Davy's explanation should not be left unnoticed. This illustrious chemist having discovered the metals of the alkalies, and their very strong affinity for oxygen, supposed that this strong affinity and fierce combination would furnish an explanation of volcanic phenomena. Any one who has thrown a very small fragment of potassium or sodium into a basin of water, especially sodium, and has heard it explode and burst into flame, can form some idea of the tremendous explosions which would ensue to such metals, if existing in large masses in the interior of the earth, when they suddenly gain access to the water of the sea, or to some other source of oxygen. But the explanation has the difficulty that, notwithstanding the disclosures of the spectroscope, the existence within the earth of the metals of the alkalies uncombined is scarcely more than hypothetical.

Another suggested cause for volcanic action is electricity; and this cause would suit very well the fact that volcanic disturbance makes itself felt simultaneously or nearly so at places far apart on the earth's surface, and also would agree with the evidence of electric disturbance which so often accompanies volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. To propound the connection between electricity and earthquakes an article in the *Quarterly Review* was devoted some two years ago. But the fact that volcanic action is accompanied by electrical disturbance helps us but little in determining the true cause, since there is probably no movement of matter which is not accompanied by electrical disturbance; and the hypothesis in question will require us to disregard some important facts of which an account ought to be given. The *Quarterly* writer, in opposition to a large body of evidence, considers that the idea of permanent change in the condition of the earth, and of the level of coastlines, etc., through "subterranean and volcanic influence," is, if not a delusion, at any rate a thing not yet proven.

In the present state of knowledge, and provisionally, it seems best to refer volcanic phenomena to several causes, acting sometimes singly, at other times in combination. If the earth has not a central fluid mass it may yet contain horizontal fissures comparatively near the surface, some of great length and width, and either

[1] The term "Vulcanology," it may be supposed, is intended to relate to both volcanoes and earthquakes, which, indeed, cannot be separated, while the other word, which some have adopted, "Seismology," can refer only to earthquakes.

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hollow or filled with melted rocks and lava. In the hollow fissures, steam and gases, the result of chemical action, may accumulate, to expand or explode under varying influences. Lakes or oceans of melted lava might readily become a source of disturbance by the irruption of the sea and other causes. Nor is the attraction of the sun and moon to be disregarded. If the solid earth cannot be raised as the waters of the ocean are in tides, nevertheless an attractive force must be exerted, which, co-operating with other causes, may very well, as Professor Falb thinks, render earthquakes more probable at certain seasons than at others. The so-called "tidal wave," of whose destructive effects at the Sunda Straits the telegraph has lately brought us such sad intelligence, must not be referred to this attraction. It results either from a shock or blow at the bottom of the ocean-bed contemporaneous with that on land, or from the earth-wave which the land-shock has produced being continued out under the ocean, accompanied and followed, as it would necessarily be, by reaction. If the wave has had its origin in the ocean-depths, it would attain, on a shelving bottom near the shore, greater altitude, and, driven onward by the original force, would far transgress the usual limits of the sea, as it bursts on the land.

THOMAS TYLER.

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IN "BAGMAN'S LANE."

A TRUE STORY.

WHEN I was nine or ten years old, my father was the rector of a wild parish in the Forest of Dean, innocent of school board or vaccination laws, where parson, squire, magistrate, and occasionally doctor, were combined in one and the same office. Belonging to the glebe, which he farmed himself, was an outlying field, situated at the other end of the village, more than a mile from any house. We children were fond of this field, it was always so full of cowslips in spring time. And yet we were just a little bit afraid of it. For at one end, where the ground rose suddenly, forming a sort of terrace along one whole side of the field, were two old limekilns, surrounded with trees and an undergrowth of brambles, whence, alongside the meadow, led a deep narrow lane, completely covered in by the tall thick hedges. And there was a gloomy story connected with these limekilns, which made us always glad to get away from them, out into the middle of the field.

Years before, a bagman had put up one Saturday night at the village inn. He was a silly fellow, who must needs boast of the money he was carrying. Not that this would have mattered in the ordinary course of things, for the foresters are as honest as the day, but one cannot answer for all the company in an inn kitchen, and it chanced that two strangers were present, Welshmen, who had not been long in the village, but had already managed to make it too hot for them, and they heard what the bagman said.

The bagman slept in the inn that night, and rose to pursue his journey on Sunday morning. The two Welshmen were on the watch and followed him. Unobserved they tracked him through the village and up the hill and down the little narrow lane. There, screened from sight by the high banks and overhanging hedges, the robbers came up with their victim. In vain he prayed and implored. They dragged him up to the old limekilns, stripped him of all he had, and then murdered him, and cast his body down the kiln, to lie hidden among the rank nettles and the clinging bind-weed and the tangled undergrowth that forced its way between the stones.

The labourers going to their work on Monday found the corpse, and there was great alarm in the village. Suspicion at once

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fastened upon the two Welshmen, and they were pursued and arrested in the neighbouring town. But the event was never forgotten, and the tale soon grew that on the same spot the scene was still enacted, and the ghost of the bagman again and again struggled with his murderers, unable to rest, even in death, because he had broken the commandment and travelled on the "Sabbath." And so the lane which had been the scene of the crime was henceforth known as "Bagman's Lane."

But Bagman's Lane had yet fresher terrors in store for me. One fine afternoon I had set out alone on a favourite errand, gathering cowslips, and of course I made for the field where they always grew so thickly. It was a bright May afternoon, when no ghosts would be abroad, and, before climbing the gate that separated me from Bagman's Lane, I stopped to pluck some blue hyacinths that grew under the hedge.

It was well I did so, for as I was quietly bending amidst the grass I heard a voice, that of a half-gipsy fellow, well known in the village as a tramp and poacher, or worse, called Watkins.

"I tell thee thou wast wi' un," he was shouting, "I seed thee wi' my own eyes."

"And what is't to thee if I was wi' un? Bill Thompson is a sight better than a sneaking poacher like thee."

The last was a woman's voice, and one familiar to me. Peeping through the hedge I saw Watkins in angry altercation with a village girl, often called in fun, "Saucy Nance." Both had lost their tempers, and each was rating the other: Watkins for perfidy, Nance for general worthlessness. I felt quite afraid to get over the stile and pass them.

"I tell thee, Nance," cried Watkins, his voice husky with passion, "thou'st bin voolin' wi' me, as thou hast wi' many a lad. Promise me to zee no more o' that stuck-up vool, or——"

"Or what?" broke in Nance. "Thee'st beat me, I suppose! Call theeself a man and threaten to beat thy lass? There—go! I'll ha'e no more words wi' a coward such as thee."

"I'll do more than beat thee," cried the lover, lashed into fury by this repudiation. "Do'st see thich knife? There—feel un!"

With these words Watkins, quite beside himself with rage, rushed at the girl, a large clasp knife open in his hand. Seeing her danger poor Nance caught at the sharp blade as it descended, piteously begging him not to harm her.

In vain. Watkins seemed to have become a maniac, and was determined to "do for her." Very soon her fingers were hacked and bleeding from her ineffectual attempts to clutch the knife, which he wrested from her as often as she got hold of it. Forcing her on her knees, as she still clung to him, with a savage laugh he plunged the blade again and again into her breast. All the while I lay beneath the hedge, paralysed with horror, not daring to move or cry. But when the work was over, and the girl sank

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backward in the lane, the blood pouring from her wounds, and Watkins, not yet content, stooped down and still continued piercing her, my tongue burst its bonds, and a loud cry burst from my lips.

Hearing the shriek, and knowing that his crime must have been observed, Watkins made a rush at the gate, brandishing his knife. At the sight of him, hands, face, garments, smeared and dripping with blood, my strength almost failed me, but I nerved myself to make one effort for life. Slipping through the hazel bushes, an easy job for one so small, I ran across the lane and up the bank on the other side, getting fairly through the opposite hedge before Watkins caught sight of me. But I could not hope to entirely escape observation, and as soon as my head appeared above the hedge-top, knife in hand he was on my track—to secure my silence once and for all.

A boy barely ten years old had little chance in such a race with a strong and desperate man, but fortune favoured me. I was now in our own meadow, where my pet pony was always turned out to graze. Seeing me in the field he trotted up to me, tossing his proud little head, expecting the lump of sugar or handful of corn I used regularly to bring him on my visits. But lumps of sugar were far from my mind at that moment, for a sudden hope had flashed upon me; grasping his mane as he came near I swung myself on to his back, uttering a few soothing words, and urged him forward with my heels. The little fellow was a bit startled at first, but, ever ready for a game, and taking this for part of the fun, he at once broke into a gallop and carried me ahead of my pursuer, over the low gate into the road, and down the village street up to the Rectory gates. Not daring to look behind me, I guided him on by the mane, ever fancying that Watkins was at my heels, till the tall chimneys and white façade of the house rose before me, and I knew that I was safe;—and then I knew no more—the strain of that race for life became too strong for me, and I fell fainting from the pony's back on to the carriage-drive. There I was found by my father and the servants, still grasping the hyacinths that in my terror I seemed to have forgotten to let fall, with poor Fretful standing by me wondering what on earth had happened. Of course, questions were asked me as to how I came there, and what it all meant, but I could only gasp out shreds of my incredible tale as I was carried into the house, where I was put to bed immediately.

For some days I was quite ill, ever gazing in imagination on that dreadful scene, and crying out for help for myself and for the girl, and it was a week before I was strong enough to hear the end of the story and the fate of the murderer, Watkins.

Scarcely believing, or even understanding the few disconnected words that had fallen from my lips, my father had taken two or three men and hurried forth to Bagman's Lane, to see what had

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really happened. There they found only too full confirmation of my strange report. The body of the girl lay there bathed in blood, just as she had fallen, her wounds not yet dry; and, strange to say, beside his victim lay the murderer, slain by his own hand. Foiled in his design on me, and well aware that escape was hopeless now that there had been an eye witness of his crime, he had anticipated the doom that he knew must come upon him.

Watkins and Nance were buried on the same day, indeed the people talked of four cross-roads and a stake for the former, and for a long time the lane remained unused. "One set of ghostesses was bad enough," the women remarked, "but when it came to two, and in course Watkins would 'walk,' flesh and blood couldn't stand it." So the carters and ploughmen went round the other way, and even the boys out nutting passed its mouth with a shudder, ignoring the waving hazels that grew in the hedge. At last a strong-minded farmer settled the question by enclosing it in his field, and that was the last we heard of Bagman's Lane.

J. BROOKES PENFOLD.

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SONNET,

CONCERNING MAN'S SOUL.

"SOUL!" once I asked, "art thou myself or mine?"
Then further: "God, I'll rest not till I know,
Nor with man's learning will I further go
Until that thou have taught me some of thine!"
So boldly I enquired of things divine,
While off the flowers the scented breeze did blow
My answer, and methought it whispered so:
"Thou rash enquirer! as canst ill define
The scent of flowers setting all form aside,
Which scent, unwitting held, the fickle breeze
Bears further on, so neither canst divide
From a man's flesh his soul, which Time befrees,
Like wind, from things of matter day by day,
Until in death 'tis wafted quite away."

LENA MILMAN.

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
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"Will she hear me, my love, my dear:
And the strings, in their passionate swell,
Will they breathe to her listening ear
What my tongue has not power to tell?"

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TIME.

NOVEMBER, 1883.

A REAL QUEEN.

CHAPTER V.

If thou could'st change each moment of thy past
Into the sands that marked it as they rolled,
And every sand, so scattered, could'st recast
In time his crucible, to make it gold:

If from such gold a ring could forged be,
And for a gem therein thine honour set
To wear upon his finger—yet were he,
All unrepaid for even a moment's debt.

MRS. DERWENT'S son Horace had not shown himself an enterprising lover; but he was at any rate a true one. And indeed, though his enterprise had stopped short of the point of success, still it had been enough to achieve success under all ordinary conditions. When a young man has persistently called upon the mistress of his heart some half-dozen times only to find out at last that her invariable "not at home" is untrue, it would be natural enough that he, having obtained no claim upon her should conclude that his visits are disagreeable things, and cease to make them. He could not write to her in the tone or manner of a discarded lover: but he could make her uncle's death an excuse for writing a letter—which remained unanswered. Such was the manner in which Oswald Hargrave had, all unconsciously, played into the hands of Hermon Rackstraw. And of course when Sophy once changed her name and went out to service, Dr. Rackstraw himself was able to take the whole play into his own hands. In the face of such complete indifference even to his friendship, and such proof that she classed him merely with common morning

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callers and troublesome correspondents, it would have been strange if the young man's enterprise had not frozen. The only wonder is that he continued to care in any fashion for a girl who had dealt such a mortal wound to what we call vanity in others and pride in ourselves.

Perhaps he would have been somewhat less constant if he had less than eight thousand a year; at any rate if he had very much less, because then he would have had to put the extinguisher of work upon the spark that had, indeed, never been fanned into an open flame. As things were, he had leisure to be broken-hearted: and even as Sophy had turned misanthrope for his sake, so he turned misogynist for hers. One morning at breakfast he announced his intention of leaving town.

"For Scotland already?" asked his sister Anne.

"Scotland! No, indeed. What on earth should anybody go to Scotland for?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Anne. "To shoot things, or catch things, I suppose. Isn't that why *you* go?"

"I suppose it's why one's supposed to go. But it's got to be a cockney sort of business at best. I'm thinking of trying Kamschatka or Patagonia for a change. Which shall it be?"

"Horace!" exclaimed his mother. "But you're joking——"

"Indeed I'm not though. I've felt for a long time that I've been wasting my life on such trumpery as grouse and venison when there are tigers and bears——"

"Tigers in Kamschatka! oh!" cried Anne.

"Well, elephants then, or—or—whales. Something big, either way. You must see I'm wasting my life here, mother. Look at other men. Look at Hargrave. Look at Harding. Look at Rackstraw. They've been everywhere and seen everything——"

"Why, I believe you *are* serious!" said Anne. "It's just like what they do in books, when they have been rejected, or when the girl dies. Only they mostly go to Africa after lions——"

"Great Heavens!" cried Horace, flushing, "can't a woman get anything into her head without twisting it into love, and marriage, and all that rubbish? I believe it's the only idea that girls and women have got among them. A fine sort of world it would be, if men were the same."

"Well, Horace," said Anne, gently, "I'm not sure it isn't a better idea than killing things. Of the two ideas in the world, we've got the best of them. But oh, Horace—to think you won't find things just the same in Kamschatka as here! And what on earth will you do for a thirty-sixth flame? Or, let me see, thirty-seven, reckoning that Miss Fane whom we invited, and who never came: unless indeed the Kamschatkans are better looking than their pictures are——"

"Hang Miss Fane!" exclaimed her once good-tempered lover, who had let his sisters' chaff him about his innumerable first

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passions hundreds of times, and had never failed to laugh with them. "Mount Athos—that's where I'll go."

"Mount Athos? Why?"

"Because no woman is allowed to set foot there."

"Not allowed, Horace? If she isn't allowed—then depend upon it a woman will be the first thing you'll see. Fancy expecting not to find a woman where she isn't allowed! A double knock, at this time? who can that be?"

It was a gentleman, to see Mr. Derwent: and, glad of the excuse—for he was ashamed of having lost temper—he left the room.

"Mamma," said Anne, gravely, "something has happened to Horace, I know."

"And this going abroad! My dear—if it wasn't impossible, I should be convinced he had been proposing to that Miss Fane."

"It's not impossible, mamma. He wouldn't have said, 'Hang Miss Fane' if he didn't care. I brought her in on purpose to see. If anybody said, 'Hang Anne Derwent,' I should know he was thinking about me a good deal."

"It's impossible, Anne," said her mother, "because he wouldn't have been talking about tigers and whales if she hadn't said No."

"But that's it—she *has* said No."

"What—a penniless orphan say No to Horace, with Longwood and eight thousand a year?"

"But about his going abroad?"

"I must consult Dr. Rackstraw," said Mrs. Derwent, with a rather anxious sigh. "It might be for the best—I don't know. And if Horace could go abroad under his eye—Anne, I thought at one time there might be a chance of Horace and that Queen: Senhora Miranda, you know. She is quite a lady: and Dr. Rackstraw says that the jewels she has brought over alone make her a millionaire."

"A Heathen!—Oh, mamma!"

"Of course we should convert her. Dr. Rackstraw says conversion's the easiest thing in the world—he has known natives who will let themselves be converted over and over again."

"Why doesn't Dr. Rackstraw marry her himself, mamma?"

But to this Mrs. Derwent said nothing: and Anne was quite sharp enough to guess why.

Meanwhile Horace had gone into his library (so he christened his sanctum when he amazed the family circle by taking up with book-collecting), and there found Oswald Hargrave.

"It *is* rather early for a visit," said Oswald. "But I'm always in a hurry, you know—and a curious document has come into my hands in a curious way. You won't think me impertinent if I tell you that I know you have a brother——"

"A half brother, if you please," said Horace, flushing: for such a beginning as this was not the way to get his temper back again.

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"He was my father's son. I suppose you have some reason for mentioning *him*. Well?"

"Of course I have," said Oswald. "I would give the rest of my life to find him—if he is alive: and he *is* alive."

"You know Lawrence Derwent?"

"Never. I never saw him even. But he alone knows what I would give my life to know—it is not that, however, that concerns you: except that you can help me, and I am sure you will, when I tell you why. . . . . I have every reason to know that—but, by the way, what is your opinion of Dr. Rackstraw?"

"Only that he is a conceited cad," said Horace, frowning. "But he has somehow become one of us—my father had great confidence in him: and I have no doubt it was deserved."

"It comes to this, then," said Oswald, "I connect this document, which I have here, with a particular house, in which it has been just by chance discovered. I connect that house with Moldwarp, of whom you bought the 'Flora'—the most ingenious of professional forgers. I connect Moldwarp with Lawrence Derwent: and lastly, I connect Lawrence Derwent with this will. Look at it and see whether it concerns you or no."

Horace Derwent took the will, and glanced at it. But his glance became a look of the most profound attention as he examined every letter and every word. At last he folded it up slowly and laid it down.

"It does concern me—a little," he said, at last, slowly and gravely. He lighted a cigar very carefully and deliberately, and then spoke again. "I suppose you've read this?" he asked.

"Of course. It seems to be an old will in favour of Lawrence Derwent. As to what it really is——"

"I know. You think it's forged. Why?"

"Because I know Silver Moldwarp: and because I suspect Hermon Rackstraw. As you see, this is a will that would establish Lawrence Derwent's innocence. I have the best reason to believe that he is even now hidden in London, and in communication with both Moldwarp and Rackstraw. Moreover I have even better reason to believe that he was in communication with Moldwarp at the time of his escape from Lowmoor. And look at the witnesses' names: Silver Moldwarp—Hermon Rackstraw. If it were not forged, would it not have been brought forward long before now? Moldwarp has forged much more difficult things than wills."

"I see. And who found it? And where?"

"Strangely enough, Madame Miranda. At Crossmarsh, near Laxham: and near Lowmoor: and where Moldwarp was once in service with the Fanes."

"Then your theory is this, Hargrave," said Horace, quietly—for all the world as if he were discussing another man's affairs: "you think that Lawrence Derwent and Rackstraw have invented

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a plot: that they have employed Moldwarp to forge and hide, and Madame Miranda to go down and find?"

Oswald started—that she also might be in the plot, whatever it was, had never occurred to his mind: though it was certainly remarkable that she should not only have bought Crossmarsh in such frantic haste, but have discovered a document bearing Rackstraw's signature the very next day. Nor was his opinion of the lady altered by his change of feeling—fascination would naturally be her stock in trade.

But "No," he answered, quickly, "she would hardly have parted with it to me——"

"True. 'Crossmarsh, near Laxham,'" he said, noting the address down. "Will you do me a favour, Hargrave—or rather several favours? Don't say to any living soul a word of what you have said to me. And take charge of this will yourself: don't let it come into my hands till I ask you for it in writing. If you'll do this for me, I pledge myself that you *shall* meet Lawrence Derwent—if he is in London, and alive. . . . . Where are you staying? Where are you to be found?"

"I must get down to Laxham to-night—here is my address there. But about these conspirators—what is your plan? You know my interest in all this: to meet with Lawrence Derwent——"

"I have said you shall: if he is alive. You won't think I mistrust you, Hargrave, if I go to work alone?"

"I am afraid you must act alone," said Oswald. "I have tried, and failed: and it is only you who can know how to deal with Rackstraw. Of course I will say no word to a mortal soul: and of course I will keep this forgery as long as you please."

There was an altogether new decision of tone and manner about Horace that rather surprised Oswald, and at the same time gave him greater confidence in his acquaintance's capacity for action than he had hitherto been disposed to place in him. But then it is true, that to have one's whole fortune attacked by a gang of robbers is enough to find a man in energy and decision, however little may have been given him by nature. And such a series of accidents had renewed Oswald's faith that at last the work of his life was about to prove not in vain.

But infinitely more surprised would he have been, could he have seen Horace Derwent after the consultation was over and he had gone his way. The young man tossed away his cigar, and covered his face with his hands.

"My mother—the girls—what is to become of *them?*" he groaned aloud.

For he knew it was no forgery that he had seen. He knew, as a matter of family history, what the nature of his brother's defence had been—that he had at his father's own request destroyed the will disinheriting him, so as to make him safe in his right as heir-at-law in case there should be no time for another

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will to be made. He knew all the history of that death-bed as no stranger, like Oswald, could guess them. And there were solid reasons, besides his father's signature, and the kind of paper the Colonel had always used, and the allusions and turns of phrase that nobody could possibly have reproduced, unless indeed, it might be Rackstraw. Nobody could have done it but he; and he would surely have not inspired the forgery of a will that abused him in good round terms as a knave and a scoundrel who had done all he could to make mischief between a father and his son. Nor would he have inspired a forgery that revoked a handsome legacy, and left him nothing at all. But on the other hand, that last reason made it his interest to suppress a will which, as his signature in witness showed, he knew had been made.

But why had he not destroyed it? If he had only done his work thoroughly, the younger son whom he had served would not have had to wake up from his idle dream of life to find himself a beggar in the land. Was it partly to keep himself from a terrible temptation that he had bidden Oswald keep the will? Very honest men do not know what they are capable of until they are tried.

"The infernal scoundrel! And for the sake of a few thousands he has robbed an heir of his inheritance, and sworn an innocent man into gaol. And *I* have been amusing myself with stolen goods all these years—and my brother—it is horrible! What has become of *him?* What it must be—to lose liberty, honour, everything worth having on earth, and to think that thieves and fools and idlers are pampering themselves on one's soul. . . . . And my mother will have to know: and though he is my brother, he is not her son——"

So he thought and felt; and yet not for one moment did it enter even his very deepest heart to upbraid Rackstraw for not having destroyed the will. Nor did he even hate Oswald Hargrave for having meddled in another man's concerns.

There are cases in which one must be either a scoundrel or a hero—in which it is impossible to be merely an honest man. Had Horace Derwent been tempted to frame such a wish, even in thought, he would have been a worse man than Dr. Rackstraw, who, after all, probably did not consider that he had done unto others worse than they would have been justified in doing unto him—if they were able. Nevertheless, it is not common honesty that does not think twice about the right and the wrong of giving up a fine estate, a large fortune, and all the pleasures and luxuries which have become the necessaries of life, and to ruin one's nearest and dearest into the bargain, and all for the sake of one whom one has been brought up to fear, to hate, and to scorn. Common honesty would have done right: but it would have thought twice about where the right lay—perhaps three times.

He did not see his mother before he left the house; and for

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the simple reason that he was afraid. All men think that all women are more apt to judge by prejudice or interest than they; and, though he did not frame the thought, he felt that a mother so wholly under the influence of Dr. Rackstraw, would not be entirely competent to advise her own son to ruin both himself and her. And why should he call upon her to face trouble before he could tell her its extent, or suggest how it was to be remedied? So, without a moment's delay, he went out, and drove straight to the Agency-General of the Goblin Islands. He thought, in the conceit of good intentions, that he would be able to compel a confession from one who, being a knave, ought, according to common superstition, to be a coward besides, and no match for resolute honesty.

It was more fortunate for the knave than for honesty, however, that Dr. Rackstraw was not within.

"I will wait," said Horace, to the sharp lad, "till he comes in."

"I'm afraid you'll have to wait a goodish while, Mr. Derwent," said the sharp lad. "The Doctor's gone to the Goblins."

There was nothing unusual in that, for Dr. Rackstraw thought nothing of a sudden trip to the Antipodes and back again, and, more often than not, said nothing beforehand about such expeditions, any more than if Port Rackstraw, or Atlantis, or Xanadu, or wherever he might have business in cotton, hardware, or rum, were but just across the Thames. Had Horace been aware of the Doctor's close relations with Senhora Miranda and of his feelings towards Sophy Fane, he would no doubt have been very much surprised by such sudden and unreasonable absence: as it was, he was only disappointed. For it was the last pitch of cruelty to leave justice undone and injustice triumphant even for a single hour.

The next best thing he could do was to set to work upon Moldwarp, whom Hargrave had no doubt rightly judged to be implicated —though in the concealment, and not in any forgery, the last being utterly out of the question. He remembered the shop where he had bought that new historical "Flora" for Æneas Fane: and was this time fortunate enough to find the person he wanted at home.

"It's a time since you have been our way, sir," said the bookseller, politely. "I suppose you're like the rest of 'em: everybody's found out now where books is to be picked up like flint stones, for the price of an old song. I've got some real uniques, that'll be worth their weight in gold in a year or two, but I can't afford to keep 'em these bad times: and you may make your fortune out of 'em. Here's——"

"I have seen a will executed by my father, Colonel Derwent," said Horace, at once, "and witnessed by you and Dr. Rackstraw. I want the present address of my brother, Mr. Lawrence Derwent, if you please."

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"The Devil!" exclaimed the bookseller: a heavy folio falling from his hands and raising a dust from the floor.

"You had better lose no time," said Horace. "I am in a hurry —and there is none to lose. It will save fencing if I tell you at once that a will has been found at a place called Crossmarsh, and that it has come into my hands. I am told also that my brother is in London, and that you know where."

Moldwarp raised the folio, dusted it, and found a place for it on the shelves. Then he took his gold spectacles, carefully rubbed the glasses, and returned them to his nose.

"Mr. Derwent, sir," said he, "then all I can say is, now you've got hold of the thing, nothing could please me more: no, nor half so well. Of course you'll say I ought to have destroyed that there will. And you'd be right, sir. For once, instinc' has led me wrong. No—'twasn't instinc', neither: 'twas because for once I tried to be too wise for instinc': that's what it were. And I'll never do it again. I ask your pardon for not having destroyed that there will, Mr. Derwent—on my bended knees, I do."

It no more entered the heart of Silver Moldwarp that Rackstraw and Horace Derwent together, or Horace Derwent alone, had not destroyed the will which unlucky chance had brought into their hands, than he could imagine any other possible combination of circumstances under which a man would risk the loss of eight thousand a year. But it took Horace at least a whole second to realise that Moldwarp assumed him to be, as a matter of course, an accomplice in the original fraud—at any rate after the fact: and this moment gave the other time to shift his ground further still.

For the game was up, anyhow, so far as making his fortune out of the rightful heir was concerned. He could only curse the evident stupidity of that rightful heir, who must have bungled matters in a most marvellous manner before the will could have come in those hands to whom its existence meant ruin. "'Tis just my regular luck all over again," he mentally groaned. "First and foremost I lose my place with old Squire Fane: and all by chance like, and no fault of mine. Then I fall out with old Rackstraw, for him being ungrateful—no fault of mine again. Then I go and trust a fool. 'Tis hard. Instinc's own self's no match for a fool. I do believe if instinc' led me straight down to the bottom of the diamond mines, some fool would go and cut away the rope I came down by. 'Tis enough to make an honest man give up instinc' and turn Rogue."

He saw, as plainly as he could see other men's blunders, that Lawrence Derwent must have bungled matters in such wise as to let the will slip back again into the hands of Rackstraw; and his knees felt ready to bend themselves with shame and reverence before that great and unconquerable man. Remorse and repentance overwhelmed him for having dared to pit his wits against

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those of his master, who was no doubt aware of the whole extent of his treachery in the interests of justice and law. There was only one thing to be done—to return abjectly to his allegiance, and to make the best bargain left him.

"You see, sir," said he, "now that document's back again in the right hands—which in course is yours and the doctor's—there's no harm done. And you're quite right: you nor yours will get no peace till that there Lawrence is safe again in gaol. I tell you, mister, he's a regular dangerous man: and he'll now be that desperate, now he's lost his rights—I should say his chances—that your life won't be worth a minute's purchase: nor Rackstraw's: nor mine. I'll do, to rectify my bit of a mistake through not trusting instinc', the best I can. You're a gentleman, mister: and I'm but an unlucky customer that's come to grief by no fault of his own——"

"I understand," said Horace, with a passion of indignant scorn too deep to express itself in word or tone. "You were employed by Dr. Rackstraw to destroy the will, in order to cheat Lawrence Derwent. Instead of destroying it, you concealed it, in order to cheat Dr. Rackstraw. Because you could not get as much black mail as you wanted, I suppose, you try to sell the will back to Lawrence Derwent. Finding the will in my hands, you are willing to sell Lawrence Derwent to Dr. Rackstraw, Lowmoor, and me. Very well. I will buy him—such perseverance ought not to go without reward. What was Lawrence Derwent to give you for his estate and his good name?"

"No, sir—no, Mr. Derwent! If I'd destroyed that there will I should have committed a crime. And if Dr. Rackstraw chose to be ungrateful, that was no fault of mine. And if I tried to get back the will for its lawful owner, *that* was no fault of mine. And if I consent to give up a convict—'tis hard times, mister: for though duty's duty, like instinc's instinc', that there convict he promised me five thousand pounds: which' is a goodish bit to lose."

"And for how much—if you had one—would you sell your soul?"

"Well, sir—seems to me Rackstraw's selling his pretty cheap, and you're selling yours pretty dear. As there's souls going, I don't see why I shouldn't go to market with mine."

"It is certainly hard you should sell it for nothing. Of course you are putting yourself in a position to renew the black mail trade—so we can talk afterwards of terms. Where is Lawrence Derwent now?"

"Begging your pardon, mister, you seem to take uncommon kindly to the trade. When old Rackstraw goes off, he won't want for a better to come after. Well—'tis all the same to me, since you put it like a gentleman. There's only one bit of advice to give you, sir. You shouldn't have let me know you'd seen that will. You see, sir, that put's you in a man's power. But for the

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rest, Mr. Derwent, you've done it beautiful: well nigh as well as Rackstraw."

"Then—where is Lawrence Derwent to be found?"

"Where that will come from, to be sure. Crossmarsh: Lowmoor—all handy by."

Chapter VI.

Though way-worn steps for refuge seek
Where hands that builded well,
Of Duty raised on granite peak
The maiden citadel:—

When Oswald had taken his departure, Sophy, her attendance upon her sovereign not being immediately required, set out upon a tour of exploration over the old house, from which she had been absent very nearly as long as Rosamond. Not being of a sentimental nature, nor a slave to association, its nooks and corners had but little significance for her save as signs of a childhood that she had almost forgotten and did not wish to recall. Still she could not help having a natural curiosity about seeing how the old place looked, and how far it had changed. It was wonderful, now that she saw it by daylight and in sunshine, how little change she was able to find.

Naturally, in the course of her rambles upstairs and downstairs, she arrived at length at the passage leading to Rosamond's castle. But, from the far end of the passage, she heard the sound of voices: and, when she reached the castle door, found a couple of workmen busily engaged.

"What *is* being done here?" asked she.

"Only doing Madame's orders, miss," said one of the men, "to fasten up this here door—we've finished the trap inside. And a good job too."

"How strange! why does Madame Miranda want to close this room?"

"Yes, miss: and we've to brick up the passage. And a good job too, as I said afore."

"It's a very strange order," pondered Sophy. "And why do you call it a good job, please?" she had become to some extent used to the caprices of her mistress: but this sudden order, to brick off a passage and a couple of rooms for no imaginable cause, seemed to go beyond the bounds of even uncivilised eccentricity.

The two men looked at one another, as if to consult before answering her question. The village mind is prodigal with hints; but it is a dangerous thing to be the first to give a haunted house a bad name. It may drive away money from a place, as well as residents and their company: and so, as all who take

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haunted houses learn to their cost, they have at last to find out from their servants the sort of purchase with which they have saddled themselves.

"Well, miss," said one, "Madame didn't say why—but maybe 'tis foreign fashions——"

"But you said it was a good job, yourself," said Sophy, persistently. One need not be sentimental in order to feel aggrieved at a new owner's taking liberties with a house that was one's own but a few days ago. Nay, the feeling is sure to rise up even when the days are years. For our house is but our outward body; and our life is its soul.

"Yes, miss—most jobs are good, these times——"

"No," said Sophy, getting provoked, and using her quick eyes, "you didn't mean that. Is there anything—said—about this room?"

"Well, miss—if you put it that way——"

"Yes: I put it that way."

"Then 'tisn't me nor my mate here that says it, miss: but 'twas in that room Old Harry carried off Miss Fane."

"Oh!"

"Yes, miss: it do sound queer. But that's the tale. And when a room gets thought on like that——"

"I see: it is best closed."

So she wandered back again to the staircase, supposing that some such idle nonsense had already found its way to the Queen's ears, and wondering that a woman of such shrewdness should be such a slave to her native heathen superstitions as to imagine that a disembodied phantom could be imprisoned by bricks and nails.

And, no doubt, it was superstition: though not quite of the gross kind that Sophy supposed. Rosamond's panic of last night, when she dashed her lamp away into the darkness, had been extreme. It was a sudden and violent renewal of the old influence that had well-nigh driven her into brain fever years ago: and it was a great deal more. It was as if one were suddenly, when full grown, to meet in sober earnest with some imaginary horror that had been the dread of one's childhood—that horror which, if one lives to be a hundred, one never forgets, come what may. Her very first thought, when the sunlight came, was to close this book of her whole life for ever, before returning to her Arcadian people and their golden age. And the wood and brickwork she had ordered was but the natural, outward and visible sign of that final closure. There was something terrible about that old room of hers, but there was something sacred also. Its further use would be fully as much profanation as peril. For that room was the tomb of all her hopes and all her dreams: it was haunted indeed. And all nations close their graves.

In this manner she settled all accounts with her past: it was as

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if she had travelled all the way from the other side of the world solely to fasten the door of an empty room. She had only to make one last pilgrimage to certain old haunts and scenes before blotting them all out altogether. Nor, since Oswald's faithlessness and indifference to his kindred in friendship, was her last pilgrimage touched by any sort of regret or sorrow. She had convinced herself that it was her pleasure as well as her duty and her destiny to leave all behind, and she had not, even in London, lost the health which enabled her to face the future, though a Queen and alone. She did not even regret having come to England. It was only right to know the worst, and not to live in a fool's paradise of illusions.

So she purposely rid herself of her secretary's company before strolling off to the cliff path whence she was supposed to have thrown herself into the sea, and to the boathouse on the beach, and to Crossmarsh Church, and to Pix Knoll. That mine of imposture still showed the excavations, longwise and crosswise, from which her uncle had sought to recover the history of the prehistoric world: but the grass had invaded these works from the Downs, and was covering away the old Squire's folly.

As she rambled, she more and more consciously and resolutely forced her thoughts away from herself, and bent them upon what she should do for her people, for whom she must henceforth live wholly, and whom she must strive to love, for her own sake as well as for theirs, to the utmost of her power. And she could reach but one conclusion—she could not perceive that England, with all its greatness, had given her anything to carry back to Apahu. Even the religious part of the question was ceasing to trouble her, and for what seemed to her the best of all reasons: that by their fruits are nations to be known—and that to seek to carry grapes and figs from a country where men only preach to one where they however ignorantly practised would be a fool's labour. She had no sort of doubt herself as to what she had learned in the very church where she had been christened and under which she was standing: but she could not comprehend how the Christianity of a country whose people regard money as of value could be worth exporting to one which thought doing right the only thing about which any sane creature could care. And then there was Lowmoor, within but a few miles of her. To bring England to Apahu would be to bring its gaols: for what is civilisation without a gaol, and all that leads there? Surely, she thought, what we are, and not what we call ourselves, is the great thing. They were right—Apahu ought not to be so much as named across the sea. Well: it shall never be named nor heard of again."

It had been a solemn day for her, but, though melancholy as well as solemn, not wholly unhappy, and she returned late in the

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afternoon to the house in a quieter mood of mind, and with better courage for the future, than since she had left her kingdom. She had persuaded herself that Rosamond Fane was buried in her empty bower, and that nothing remained alive but the duties of Queen Ngahoung.

Sophy also had left the house, so she learned from Mrs. Crowe, who was acting for the present as cook and housekeeper, and had not yet returned. Rosamond was a little vexed, for, having thought so much, she wanted to talk a little, and she learned to need the companion who seemed to worship her, and was vowed to follow her to the other end of the world. However, it was natural enough that Miss Grey should be making the most of a first day of country freedom by the sea. But Rosamond was not fated to be left without company, for she had not settled herself in the drawing-room window over a book for half an hour when Mrs. Crowe disturbed her with the announcement of a gentleman to see her.

"Mr. Hargrave, again?" asked she, with a frown.

"Oh no, my lady," answered Mrs. Crowe—for some vague idea of the new comer's rank had followed her down even to Crossmarsh, in the unaccountable manner of such things. "He's Mr. Derwent, says he."

Rosamond sighed: for she had made up her mind to cut herself adrift at once from every English connection—and especially from those which had to do with Rackstraw. Her acquaintance with the Derwents was slight enough, but still it had to do altogether with Rackstraw: and what should so slight an acquaintance mean by coming down upon her here? Had her professor of civilisation discovered her flight, and did he intend to return? If so, then he should see that she intended to rebel: for the Doctor's guidance had become exceedingly like tyranny now that she knew how to walk alone.

However, there was nothing for it but to receive him graciously, and to hear what he had to say.

She hardly knew him by sight: and indeed his mood, on the occasion of her introduction to English society at his mother's house, was not such as to enable him to remember her very clearly—he had been the only man there who had been impression proof during the short season of her being the rage.

"I am on too important business to apologise for intruding on you, Madame," said he. "I understand it was you who discovered my father's, Colonel Derwent's will."

"Oh—that paper!" said she, relieved: for she had forgotten that insignificant accident of her adventure. "Yes: I found a paper, which I gave to Mr. Hargrave. Is there anything you want to ask me? Though I hardly guess what it can be."

"Surely, Madame, you know——"

"Indeed I do not, Mr. Derwent," said she, a little proudly—

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Queens are not used to contradiction, even in Apahu: and henceforth she was to be more than ever a Queen.

"Of course you know that your forwarding me that document through Mr. Hargrave gave me only one thing to do: and I thank you with all my heart for letting there be no delay. Can I see my brother at once—now?"

"Your brother, Mr. Derwent?" asked Rosamond, beginning to wonder if the young man was quite right in his mind.

"My brother—Lawrence Derwent, who is staying with you."

"You are under some strange mistake, sir. I have nobody with me but my friend, Miss Grey. As to Lawrence Derwent, I never heard the name."

"Did he not come down here to find this very will? Did you not find it just where he knew it was to be found? Did you not know from him that it gave him back what I have been robbing him of nearly all my life——"

For how can men judge but by their own natures? Even as Silver Moldwarp assumed that the will could not come into the hands of Horace without instant destruction, so Horace took for granted that it had been forwarded to him in the confidence that he would do justice. And, instructed by Moldwarp, he could only suppose that this lady was aiding the rightful heir in this affair. It was natural that Lawrence should keep in the background until his innocence as well as his rights should be made amply clear.

"Pray explain yourself," said Rosamond, with a touch of impatience. "I never heard of your brother, or knew you had one. I found this will by the merest chance—in a cupboard, in a lumber room, under a trap-door——"

"Yes: exactly where he was told. Madame," he went on, eagerly, in a low, quick voice, "I thank you with all my heart for your protection of my infamously wronged brother: but there is no need for your loyal, generous secrecy any more. Let me see him face to face, and take his hand—if he will give it me: I come to give him back his rights and his good name."

Rosamond could only wait for light. He could only take her silence for hesitation.

"You and he trusted me with the will," said he. "Can you doubt my good faith *now?* You see I have not lost a single moment in coming down. Imagine, if you can, what it is to me to have had all my brother's wealth, and to have been in his place, while he has been a martyr to villany—a convict: an outlaw:——"

"I think I understand," said Rosamond, thoughtfully, "that you are come here to do some just or generous thing. And so I am glad of the chance that made me find the will. Will it cost you much money to do what you wish to do?"

"For Heaven's sake, Madame," cried Horace, "don't keep me on the rack any more. Don't you know that every penny I possess on earth, and every inch of ground, is shown by that will

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to be my brother's, and that I have come to give back to him all —to him, who has been made a felon in trying to rob me, while I, though not knowing it—thank God for that—have been robbing him of wealth, honour and all?"

Very different indeed was the young man whom Rosamond saw and heard from him who examined Moldwarp so quietly. The Queen gave him her hand, with a royal smile.

"Why, here is one at last who only thinks of doing right!" said she: thinking of what her thoughts had been in the churchyard that very day.

"I should be a greater cad than Rackstraw else," said he: not caring to remember that the Doctor was this lady's friend. "But as to my brother——"

"You want to see him, of course: instantly. I understand now. If I knew where he was! But I told you simple truth when I said I had never heard of him, or his name. What made you think he was here?"

"Because he knew where this will was to be found. Thank Heaven, any way, that it came into my hands first—and thank you too for that, Madame. It is something that I may give him back his own freely, and with my own hands."

"I should think it would not be very difficult to find him," said Rosamond, "considering what he is wanted for—if he was coming here to search, as you say, perhaps he will come, still."

"But you don't know all," said Horace, bitterly. "He is in the position of a convicted felon, who escaped from gaol—from Lowmoor. He would not dare to risk an open search——"

"Escaped from Lowmoor!" exclaimed Rosamond, who could almost fancy that she again heard that signal gun which had broken her life in two. "There have been but two escapes from Lowmoor: one man was dashed to pieces over Furnace Point: the other—Ah! then when he called himself guiltless, it was true: and he must have been hidden in the same room with this very will—why did he not find it then? Oh, God, what I should have been spared!"

She had forgotten herself and her part: and no wonder, for to her all was as clear as day. Indeed she had become blind to her companion's presence in the hideous knowledge that her life had been cursed and her heart well nigh broken by reason that Lawrence Derwent had not discovered a scrap of paper that had been literally under his very fingers for days.

"Madame! What made you start when I named Lowmoor? Then you *do* know——"

"Forgive me: I'm afraid I *was* startled—I only mean that what you have said—yes: you may be at ease: I do know your brother after all: I do know where he is to be found. But I know him under another name—and there are reasons why he must never know nor hear of me. And so long as you meet him, it is enough

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for you and for him: you will not ask my reasons, and he will not know from whom your knowledge comes—and indeed before you can meet, I mean to be far away. Have a little patience: for all this means as much to me as to you—ah, and more. Have a little patience: he nor you can lose by it, and I shall gain—all I have left to gain. Forget all I said just now. You shall meet your brother: but it must be in my own way." For she had not closed the tomb in order that her life might be haunted still, or buried her past self in order that he whom she had recognised with terror in the man from Nevada should recognise Rosamond Fane in the Queen of Apahu. It would be easy to make her escape unbetrayed so long as she kept matters in her own hands. "I promise you," she said, holding out her hand, "on the word of a Queen . . . . . Ah, Sophy—you are a good child to have found so much to say to the sun and the wind, as we say at—home. Mr. Derwent, this is my dear friend and daughter, Miss Grey."

"Good God—Sophy!" cried he: "Miss Fane!"

Sophy bent herself towards him coldly and proudly. But, hearing her name spoken, and all miserable at meeting this false friend, she stood trembling like a detected impostor before the Queen.

CHAPTER VII.

Yet soon as from the vale below
A breath hath reached their air,
The granite crumbles as the snow,
And Duty bideth—Where?

TWILIGHT was too far advanced for anything but a lover's recognition of his lost mistress: so that Sophy's downcast and tearful eyes did not perceive how the Queen's looks received evidence of an untruth which, however slight, should unfit any creature for the society of Apahu.

"Mr. Derwent," said Rosamond, in a voice that seemed to tremble faintly, as with vibrations that follow the stroke of a bell, "you have my promise—I will see you to-morrow, at whatever hour you come. I can say nothing more till then."

"I *will* come," said he: and it was to Sophy he spoke, though he addressed the Queen. "I trust your promise, Madame. And you may trust mine, that not one of these mysteries in which you live shall remain by the time to-morrow is gone."

So he went back to where he had met Moldwarp at the "Feathers," hardly knowing, at the last, whether this woman were friend or foe: yet failing to imagine how or why she could be otherwise than friend. Had it not been for that sudden sight of Sophy, and in her company, he might not have let himself be dismissed in such royal fashion. And could it be Senhora Miranda who was at any rate his enemy there?

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"Madame—" began Sophy.

Rosamond was silent.

"It is quite true. I am Miss Fane from whom you bought Crossmarsh. I had a reason for not wishing—for not wanting to keep my name: of course it had nothing to do with you: and it seemed wise at the time: and Dr. Rackstraw advised ——"

"I have never told you *my* story," said Rosamond. "I will tell it you now."

"You are not angry, then, Madame?"

"You shall see. Had you ever a sister?"

"Yes, indeed——"

"What became of her?"

"It is a sad story, Madame. Something happened to her brain: and she—she fell one night over the cliffs: close by here. We—we never lived here, after that time."

"I once knew a woman who had a wonderful story. She had a sister—like you. She, too, lived close by the sea. She was an odd sort of girl, living all alone with her own foolish plans and fancies, until she was fifteen years old."

"Our poor Rosamond's age!" said Sophy: wondering what all this preface could mean, relieved at having escaped instant dismissal, but giving all her real thoughts to that unlooked-for meeting with him on whose account she was going into exile.

"Indeed? Well," said Rosamond, "I suppose we have both known what fifteen means. A poor fellow, wrongfully imprisoned, had escaped from gaol——"

"I thought there were no prisons in Apahu?"

"Nor ever shall be. This was not in Apahu . . . . . He threw himself upon the protection of this girl. She concealed him, and helped him to escape from his enemies. But he did not trust her. He left the land in a boat: and, that there might be no witness of escape, he forced her away with him—away from sister, friends, home, without a word to say how or where or why she had gone, or if she would ever return. Think, if you can, what that voyage must have been: for they were carried by a passing ship to the other side of the world: and not a word or sign could she send home. At last there came a storm, and the ship went down. The girl was saved, and thrown by the sea upon a shore that none but they who dwell on it have ever seen. It is laid down on no maps: no ship ever passes by: it is another world than ours, in all its thoughts and ways. The people thought this girl born there by miracle from the sea, which divides the world of men from the world of spirits: and they made her queen. They were good: but she became more and more unhappy, year by year, and day by day . . . . . You have had a home: a sister: you will know why . . . . . At last what *she* thought was miracle allowed her to escape—are you listening?"

"Indeed, Madame, I am!"

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"She took certain vows to the gods of her people, and hastened home—Oh, what hopes and fears! But—her uncle Æneas was dead, and her sister Sophy——"

Sophy gave a cry, and started to her feet. "What are you telling me? What does all this story mean?"

Rosamond opened her arms, and her heart—

"Oh, Sophy, Sophy—Don't you see? I am Rosamond—come back from the grave!"

It was the supreme moment for which her whole soul had been hungering, and of which it had at last learned to despair. But there was no more despair now—all was forgotten and swept away, save that she and Sophy were together at Crossmarsh again once more. Home became home in an instant's flash: Apahu became the dream. She sobbed with joy—joy that had been suppressed and distorted into one great heart-ache for twelve long years.

But, alas! It was not thus with Sophy. She had not been living and breathing in one thought all this while. She had mourned and wept for her dead sister like the quick-hearted child of April that she had been from the beginning: and then, in her life of travel abroad, in her studying, her pleasures, and her excitements, she had lived a new small life nearly every day. Rosamond had been talked about until the subject was worn out, and then not talked about until she had become, if not a myth, yet a family legend. And then came the other household troubles: and then had entered into Sophy's life that element which well-nigh slays all others. The memory of a dead sister can scarcely count for much against the fact of a living lover, be he false or true.

This woman Rosamond? Why, she had well-nigh forgotten Rosamond's very features, save in the very vaguest way. And then it was as yet all too real to understand—bewildered as Sophy was, such an undreamed of resurrection filled her less with joy than with dismay.

There is surely no such mistake in the universe as to return from one's grave. Let every corpse rest at peace: let it assure itself that its survivors are very far from being heart-broken. It will only come back to lose its way among a labyrinth of new growths, and its place filled. Rosamond had been put away and forgotten: and Sophy, instead of being overjoyed, was only amazed.

But Rosamond felt for Sophy as well as for herself, and gave herself welcome.

"Oh, Sophy," she cried, pressing her sister to her heart, "I am glad of everything now: I am glad that I learned to like you and love you for yourself before I found out who you are. And to think that we two have been living together all this time without

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guessing—and I, trying to find you and hear of you while you were with me all this time—I thought at last you were dead, just as you thought me. Don't let us tell all our stories yet—let us just feel that we are together again, just as we used to be."

"You *are* Rosamond?" asked Sophy, with a sort of awe.

"And you are Sophy—and I don't know what to do and what to say. I have been dead—a Queen of shadows—for years. My dear, my dear—don't speak to me; let me wait till I feel awake and alive."

And indeed Sophy was glad enough to wait: for she also knew not what to do, or what to say. She could not, at two-and-twenty, take up life again, all at once from the point where it was broken off at twelve years old. Nor was this Rosamond the Rosamond who had been lost, after all. This foreign Queen, with her barbarous jewels, her high thoughts, and her strange ways, was not the dimly remembered sister who used to hide in the lumber room.

However, Rosamond herself as yet missed nothing, because she knew, or thought she knew, how she would have felt had she been Sophy, and Sophy she. They sat together, hand in hand, while she poured out a thousand questions and told a thousand things: too many thousands to tell coherently what they were. She had to ask of her uncle's last hours, of Sophy's foreign life: of how Crossmarsh came to be sold: of Silver Moldwarp: of all things and creatures save Oswald Hargrave alone. And she had to tell of her strange life in a strange land, and how her spirit sickened till it almost died, and how her heart had gone out to Sophy the first time they met—

"And no wonder!" said she. "But why did you come to me in another name?"

"Dr. Rackstraw said——" faltered Sophy.

"And what do you know of Dr. Rackstraw? What had you to do with him? And you know Mr. Derwent? And—Sophy—I have learned how all this happened—but never mind all that. We will forget everything except that we are together, you and I—Don't cry, dear it is all over now."

But it was Rosamond herself who was crying, and did not know.

"Are you still going back," asked Sophy, "to Apahu——"

"You haven't once called me Rosamond!"

"—Rosamond?" Sophy finished her question. "But it *is* all so strange—Rosamond! I feel in a dream——"

Rosamond shuddered: and all her royal duties shrivelled up and were no more. "No, dearest: they will do without me now. They have done without me for ages, and will for ages more. But I can't do without you, and home. We will go on living here, just as we planned when we were children: I am going to blot out all that has happened as if it were a nightmare, and I am going to

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"Then what in the world makes you think he ever went in?"

"Because naught's been seen of him from that minute till now. There's none but four of us know of it, sir—me, and Giles Fletcher, and the new groom at the rectory, and the shepherd at Johnson's. I haven't even told my old woman, because I gave him the key to let him in: and she'd go telling the ladies, and setting all the parish afire. 'Tis awsome to think of, Mr. Hargrave. We can't eat, nor shut an eye, not we four: and the beer's got to taste like Brimstone, sir: it do indeed."

Oswald knew that country side too well to give himself the airs of a rationalist or sceptic. "Are any of you four at the 'Feathers' now?" asked he.

"To be sure there's Johnson's shepherd—he dursn't go out of company now."

Oswald went into the parlour, followed by Mr. Crowe: and though its atmosphere was always dull enough to a man not Crossmarsh born, this evening it was something more than dull. For the news had not yet spread abroad, and those who knew it felt like members of a conspiracy: burning, yet afraid, to be the first to tell the world. There were the sceptical shepherd: and old Fletcher: and a stout person in black absorbed in a newspaper in a corner: and there was beer, and there were pipes: but no man was saying a word.

"So I hear the Devil's abroad in Crossmarsh," said Oswald. "What does it all mean, Master Fletcher? We must get to the rights of this—we mustn't have the ladies frightened out of their lives."

Then, at last, the door was opened to speech: and Mr. Crowe's story was even improved upon, if such a thing could be. Despite all that could be said to dissuade him---Oswald learned—the stranger had determined to spend the night in the chamber of evil fame, and had never been seen again—

"And 'tis my belief," said Giles, "that whatever came to Miss Rosamond Fane, that's come to he."

No man on earth was less superstitious than Oswald. But none else remembered Rosamond's story in her supposed delirium, and on the faith of which he had connected her disappearance with the escape of Lawrence Derwent from Lowmoor. There could be no imaginable connection in the shape of reason between that story and this: but then the whole thing, from first to last, was outside reason.

One of the company gave a long, solemn whistle. "And 'twas this very afternoon I was saying to the young lady 'twas a good job too—and Bill here can swear 'twas my very words!"

"A good job!" exclaimed Mr. Crowe, aghast—

"Surely—fastening up that there room. 'Twill take a toughish ghost to get through our work when 'tis finished; mine and Bill's."

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But there was so many anecdotes to prove the contempt of ghosts for carpenters' work, nay, even for coffin makers', that Oswald, for the present, was compelled to listen. Nor had he listened long, when the person in the corner laid down his newspaper, crept round the room, and at last whispered in Oswald's ear,

"Don't seem to know me, Mr. Hargrave, if you please. If you want to know something, we'll step outside."

"Moldw——"

"Hush, sir. You come along of me. . . . . When I told old Squire Fane I'd find Lawrence Derwent by instinc', you as good as said I lied. Well, sir, it's took instinc' a matter o' ten years to do it: but she's done it, and she'd have done it if it had took her, for ever and ever Amen. I've heard them fools talking, and I know 'em of old—Lawrence Derwent has been and got nailed up in that there old lumber room as sure as you're alive."

Oswald seized Moldwarp by the shoulder, as they stood before the tavern door. Moldwarp felt Oswald's arm tremble with the strength of the grasp.

"Good God!" he exclaimed. "Speak out at last—and if you lie now——"

"I won't, mister. I've come down after that convict in the interests of justice——"

"Of the reward?"

"'Tis all the same. And he'll be in that house: *and I know where.*"

"Man—all the world knows I would give half my life for one minute with Lawrence Derwent before the law can touch him."

"*I* know, mister. But half your life 'll be no manner of use to me. 'Twas something more substantial you offered ten year ago, you and old Fane."

"Then if you're not lying you may earn it twice over. But is it *there* he is concealed?"

Even in his sudden excitement, and with the hope of finding this man, startled from its ashes into flame, his heart sank—for was it not in Senhora Miranda's house that Lawrence Derwent was being concealed?

As for Moldwarp, his course at last lay clear before him. If he could save Horace Derwent from the scandal of delivering his own father's son up to justice by transferring that work to Oswald Hargrave, he would have a double claim upon the gratitude of both, besides earning a double reward. He even had visions of renewing his hold upon the great Rackstraw himself—in short of having the whole of this story under his hand.

"There, mister, sure enough. And now we're two of us after him, he's safe enough for Lowmoor, this time. Do you know a party calling himself Harding, from the American silver mines?"

"I have seen him—well?"

"That's the man. That's Lawrence Derwent, mister."

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"Ah! And *her* friend! . . . . . Moldwarp: I'm going to trust you. I am going to unearth this man now. And if you are tricking me—Heaven knows why you should, but if you are——"

"You needn't finish, mister. I'm not game to give half the rest o' *my* life, whatever you be."

"Will you come with me, now?"

"Surely, mister. I came down with a friend, but he's gone out, and won't miss me for an hour or two."

"A detective? Well, I want no constable to forestall me. I must see him, man to man. Let me see—if one goes by the cliff path, one can get up by the wall to the tiles of the dairy, and so to the window of the loft: I've done it dozens of times, when I was a boy. It will be easy enough to see if what you say is true—if he is there . . . . . Yes," he told himself, "to set a ghost story going: then to hide the man in the haunted room and to fasten up the door till a chance of escape comes: she who can invent such a plan as that will be quite clever enough to feed him too, in spite of the nails. But—She! And Sophy in Her power!"

That it is quite feasible by means of the cliff path, the wall, and the tiles, and a trifle of further climbing, to obtain a complete view of Rosamond's castle had been proved not only by Oswald, but by Lawrence Derwent himself, who could only have made his original entry into the cottage by this or similar means. What would be the next step must be dependent upon circumstances: in the first place it was needful to see if the convict was really thus hidden, according not only to Moldwarp's story but to all the unhappy likelihoods dependent upon the Senhora's acquaintance with Madame Miranda. And even if nothing more could be done to-night, the convict's escape from the house before morning could be prevented by standing guard.

So—it was moonlight now—Oswald, in company with the rascal whom of all the world he least expected to prove his ally, doubting, hoping, anxious, and yet believing, and all the while with the heaviest weight at his heart he had ever known, proceeded to that path overhanging the sea where the last vestige of Rosamond had been seen. There were no lights at the back of the house, and no passing constable was likely to mistake Mr. Hargrave of Crossmarsh for a housebreaker, despite his suspicious company: nor, for that matter, was the ragged Silver Moldwarp likely to be recognised in the stout and gold-spectacled London tradesman.

"Stay here," said Oswald, "while I climb the garden wall."

The full light of the moon was on the back windows, so that he had no need of a lantern. He had one knee on the low wall, when, looking up, he was arrested by a sight that made his heart beat with exultation, and yet sink again at the realisation of his worst suspicions of the Senhora.

At the window of the loft itself—easy of access from without,

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though, from its being near the ceiling, not from within—appeared a bulky shadow, which presently emerged into the moonlight in human form. Well was it for their sanity that neither Mr. Crowe nor Mr. Fletcher nor Mr. Johnson's shepherd was there. Oswald dropped back into the path, so that the coming encounter might take place on level ground. "Stand back," he whispered to Moldwarp. "We are two to one, so he can't escape—but I must meet him alone."

The human figure let himself down from the sill to the full length of his arms and then dropped heavily, and with something of a clatter upon the tiles. Moldwarp, black traitor as he was, must have felt something of the honest excitement of the hunter, and his heart, or whatever he had in place of it, laughed at the prospect of the triumph of Instinct over Fortune after all—Oswald his debtor: Rackstraw his subject: Horace Derwent his slave: all the revenues of Longwood his pasture . . . . . The man crept slowly along the tiles: the man from Nevada was not quite so lithe and active as ten years ago. But he knew his road. At last he stood upon the wall and looked round to see that all was clear.

He dropped to the path: and then Oswald sprang forward. It was the man from Nevada indeed.

"Lawrence Derwent—" he began—

But well-nigh before the words had left his lips, the desperate, hunted man, who had lost all that he had come to find, and was now at bay, put his hand to his breast: a quick shot broke into the roar of the rocks and waves: and the last words that Oswald's ears heard were:

"Traitor—bloodhound!"

As the body of Silver Moldwarp went flying over the cliffs to the rocks below—

Rosamond turned in her sleep: and thought she had heard the signal gun of Lowmoor in a dream.

(To be continued.)

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PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

THE origin of libraries is involved in obscurity. According to some, the distinction of having first made collections of writings belongs to the Hebrews; but others ascribe this honour to the Egyptians. Osymandyadas, one of the ancient kings of Egypt, who flourished some 600 years after the Deluge, is said to have been the first who founded a library. The temple in which he kept his books was dedicated at once to religion and literature, and placed under the special protection of the divinities, with whose statues it was magnificently adorned. It was still further embellished by a well-known inscription, for ever grateful to the votary of literature: on the entrance was engraven, "The nourishment of the soul," or according to Diodorus, "The medicine of the mind." It probably contained works of very remote antiquity, and also the books accounted sacred by the Egyptians, all of which perished amidst the destructive ravages which accompanied and followed the Persian invasion under Cambyses. There was also, according to Eustathius and other ancient authors, a fine library at Memphis, deposited in the Temple of Phtha, from which Homer has been accused of having stolen both the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey," and afterwards published them as his own. From this charge, however, the bard has been vindicated by various writers, and by different arguments.

But the most superb library of Egypt, perhaps of the ancient world, was that of Alexandria. About the year 290 B.C., Ptolemy Soter, a learned prince, founded an academy at Alexandria called the Museum, where there assembled a society of learned men, devoted to the study of philosophy and the sciences; and for whose use he formed a collection of books, the number of which has been variously computed—by Epiphanius at 54,000, and by Josephus at 200,000. His son, Ptolemy Philadelphus, an equally liberal and enlightened prince, collected great numbers of books in the Temple of Serapis, in addition to those accumulated by his father, and at his death left in it upwards of 100,000 volumes. He had agents in every part of Asia and of Greece commissioned to search out and purchase the rarest and most valuable writings; and amongst those he procured were the works of Aristotle, and the Septuagint version of the Jewish Scriptures, which was undertaken at the suggestion of Demetrius Phalereus, his first librarian. The measures adopted by this monarch for augmenting the

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Alexandrian Library were pursued by his successor, Ptolemy Euergetes, with unscrupulous vigour. He caused all books imported into Egypt by Greeks or other foreigners to be seized and sent to the Museum, where they were transcribed by persons employed for the purpose; and when this was done, the copies were delivered to the proprietors, and the originals deposited in the library. He refused to supply the famished Athenians with corn until they presented him with the original manuscripts of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripedes; and in returning elegant copies of these autographs, he allowed the owners to retain the fifteen talents (more than £3,000 sterling) which he had pledged with them as a princely security. As the Museum, where the library was originally founded, stood near the royal palace, in that quarter of the city called Brucheion, all writings were at first deposited there; but when this building had been completely occupied with books to the number of 400,000, a supplemental library was erected within the Serapeion, or Temple of Serapis, and this gradually increased till it contained 300,000 volumes—making in both libraries a grand total of 700,000 volumes.

The Alexandrian Library continued in all its splendour until the first Alexandrian war, when, during the plunder of the city, the Brucheion portion of the collection was accidentally destroyed by fire, owing to the recklessness of the auxiliary troops. But the library in the Serapeion still remained, and was augmented by subsequent donations, particularly by that of the Pergamean Library of 200,000 volumes,[1] presented by Mark Antony to Cleopatra, so that it soon equalled the former, both in the number and in the value of its contents. At length, after various revolutions under the Roman emperors, during which the collection was sometimes plundered and sometimes re-established, it was utterly destroyed by the Saracens at the command of the Caliph Omar, when they acquired possession of Alexandria, A.D. 642. Amrou, the victorious general, was himself inclined to spare this inestimable treasury of ancient science and learning, but the ignorant and fanatical caliph, to whom he applied for instructions, ordered it to be destroyed. "If," said he, "these writings of the Greeks agree with the Koran, they are useless, and need not be preserved; if they disagree, they are pernicious, and ought to be destroyed." The sentence of destruction was executed with blind obedience. The volumes of parchment or papyrus were distributed as fuel among the five thousand baths of the city, but such was their incredible number, that it took six months to consume them. This

[1] The library at Pergamus was founded by king Eumenes, and enlarged by his successor, Attalus. It soon became so extensive that the Ptolemies, afraid that it would speedily rival their own collection at Alexandria, issued an edict forbidding the exportation of papyrus; but this prohibition, so far from attaining the unworthy object for which it was destined, proved rather beneficial, for the Pergameans, having exhausted their stock of papyrus, set their wits to work, and invented parchment (*charta Pergamena*) as a substitute.

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act of barbarism, recorded by Abulpharagius, is considered somewhat doubtful by Gibbons, in consequence of its not being mentioned by Eutychius and Almacin, two of the most ancient chroniclers. It seems inconsistent, too, with the character of Amrou, as a poet and a man of superior intelligence; but that the Alexandrian Library was thus destroyed is a fact generally credited, and deeply deplored by historians. Amrou, as a man of genius and learning, may have grieved at the order of the caliph, while, as a loyal subject and faithful soldier, he felt bound to obey.

Among the Geeeks, as among other nations, the first libraries consisted merely of archives, deposited, for the sake of preservation, in the temples of the gods. Pisistratus, the tyrant of Athens, was the first to establish a public library in his native city, which, we need not say, always took the lead in everything relating to science and literature in Greece. Here he deposited the works of Homer, which he had collected together with great difficulty and at a very considerable expense; and the Arthenians themselves were at much pains to increase the collection. The fortunes of this library were varied and singular. It was transported to Persia by Xerxes, brought back by Seleucus Nicator, plundered by Sylla, and at last restored by the Emperor Hadrian. On the invasion of the Roman Empire by the Goths, Greece was ravaged; and on the sack of Athens, they had collected all the libraries, and were on the point of setting fire to this funeral pile of ancient learning, when one of their chiefs interposed, and dissuaded them from their design, observing, at the same time, that as long as the Greeks were addicted to the study of books they would never apply themselves to that of arms.

The first library established at Rome was that founded by Paulus Emilius, in the year B.C. 167. Having subdued Perses, king of Macedonia, he enriched the city of Rome with the library of the conquered monarch, which was subsequently augmented by Sylla. On his return from Asia, where he had successfully terminated the first war against Mithridates, Sylla visited Athens, whence he took with him the library of Apellicon, the Teian, in which were the works of Aristotle and Theophrastus. Lucullus, another conqueror of Mithridates, was not less distinguished by his taste of books. The number of volumes in the library was immense, and they were written in the most distinct and elegant manner. But the use which he made of his collection was still more honourable to that princely Roman than the acquisition or possession of it. "It was a library," says Plutarch, "whose walls, galleries, and cabinets were open to all visitors; and the ingenious Greeks, when at leisure, resorted to this abode of the Muses, to hold literary conversations, in which Lucullus himself loved to join." But although both Sylla and Lucullus liberally gave public access to their literary treasures, still their libraries can in strictness be considered as only private collections. Among the various

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projects which Julius Cæsar had formed for the embellishment of Rome was that of a public library, which should contain the largest possible collection of Greek and Latin works; and he had assigned to Varro the duty of selecting and arranging them. But this design was frustrated by the assassination of the dictator, and the establishment of public libraries did not take place in Rome until the reign of Augustus.

The honour of having first established these valuable institutions is ascribed by the elder Pliny to Asinius Pollio, who erected a public library in the Court of Liberty, on the Aventine Hill. The credit which he gained thereby was so great, that the emperors became ambitious to illustrate their reigns by the foundation of libraries, many of which they called after their own names. Augustus was himself an author, and in one of those sumptuous buildings called Thermæ, ornamented with porticos, galleries, and statues, with shady walks and refreshing baths, he testified his love of literature by adding a magnificent library, which he fondly called after the name of his sister Octavia. The Palatine Library, formed by the same emperor in the Temple of Apollo, became the haunt of the poets, as Horace, Juvenal and Perseus have commemorated. There were deposited the corrected books of the Sybils; and from two ancient inscriptions, quoted by Lipsius and Pitiscus, it would seem that it consisted of two distinct collections—one Greek and the other Latin. This library having survived the various revolutions of the Roman Empire, existed until the time of Gregory the Great, whose mistaken zeal led him to order all the writings of the ancients to be destroyed. The successors of Augustus, though they did not equally encourage learning, were not altogether neglectful of its interests. Suetonius informs us that Tiberius founded a library in the new Temple of Apollo; and we learn from some incidental notices that he instituted another, called the Tiberian, in his own house, consisting chiefly of works relating to the empire and the acts of its sovereigns. Vespasian, following the example of his predecessors, established a library in the Temple of Peace, which he erected after the burning of the city by order of Nero; and even Domitian, in the commencement of his reign, restored at great expense the libraries which had been destroyed by the conflagration, collecting copies of books from every quarter, and sending persons to Alexandria to transcribe volumes in that celebrated collection, or to correct copies which had been made elsewhere. But the most magnificent of all the libraries founded by the sovereigns of imperial Rome was that of the Emperor Ulpius Trajanus, from whom it was denominated the Ulpian Library. It was erected in Trajan's Forum, but afterwards removed to the Viminal Hill, to ornament the baths of Diocletian. In this library were deposited the elephantine books, written upon tablets of ivory, wherein were recorded the transactions of the emperors, the proceedings of the senate and

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Roman magistrates, and the affairs of the provinces. It has been conjectured that the Ulpian library consisted of both Greek and Latin works; and some authors affirm that Trajan commanded that all the books found in the cities he had conquered should be immediately conveyed to Rome, in order to increase his collection. The library of Domitian having been consumed by lightning in the reign of Commodus, was not restored until the time of Gordian, who rebuilt the edifice, and founded a new library, adding thereto the collection of books bequeathed to him by Quintus Serenus Samonicus, the physician, and amounting, it is said, to no fewer than 72,000 volumes.

In addition to the imperial libraries there were others to which the public had access in the principal cities and colonies of the empire. Pliny mentions one which he had founded for the use of his countrymen; and Vopiscus informs us that the Emperor Tacitus caused the historical writings of his illustrious namesake to be deposited in the libraries. The number of calcined volumes which have been excavated from the ruins of Herculaneum and Pompeii would also seem to indicate that collections of books were common in those cities. But the irruptions of the barbarians, who overran and desolated the Western Empire, proved more destructive to the interests of literature than either volcanoes or earthquakes, and soon caused the disappearance of those libraries which during several centuries had been multiplied in Italy. Those of the East, however, escaped this devastating torrent; and both Alexandria and Constantinople preserved their literary treasures, until their capture by the Saracens and the Turks, who finally subverted the Eastern Empire.

When Constantine the Great made Bysantium the seat of his empire, he decorated the city with splendid edifices, and called it after his own name. Desirous to make reparation to the Christians for the injuries they had suffered during the reign of his predecessor, he commanded the most diligent search to be made after those books which Diocletian had doomed to destruction; he caused transcripts to be made of such as had escaped the fury of the pagan persecutor; and, having collected others from various quarters, he formed the whole into a library at Constantinople. At the death of Constantine, however, the number of books in the imperial library was only 6,900; but it was successively enlarged by the Emperors Julian and Theodosius the younger, who augmented it to 120,000 volumes. Of these more than half were burned during the seventh century, by command of the Emperor Leo III., who thus sought to destroy all the monuments that might be quoted in proof respecting his opposition to the worship of images. In this library was deposited the only authentic copy of the proceedings of the Council of Nice; and it is also said to have contained the poems of Homer, written in gold letters, together with a magnificent copy of the Four Gospels, bound in

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plates of gold, enriched with precious stones, all of which perished in the conflagration. The convulsions which distracted the lower empire were by no means favourable to the interests of literature. In the eleventh century learning flourished for a short time during the reign of Constantine Porphyrogennetus; and this emperor is said to have employed many learned Greeks in collecting books, and forming a library, the arrangement of which he himself superintended. But the final subversion of the Eastern Empire, and the capture of Constantinople in 1453, dispersed the literati of Greece over Western Europe, and placed the literary remains of that capital at the mercy of the conqueror. The imperial library, however, was preserved by the express command of Mahammed, and continued, it is said, to be kept in some apartments of the seralgio; but whether it was sacrificed in a fit of devotion by Amurath IV., as is commonly supposed, or whether it was suffered to fall into decay from ignorance and neglect, it is now certain that the library of the Sultan contains only Turkish and Arabic writings, and not a single Greek or Latin manuscript of any importance.

Such is a brief survey of the most celebrated libraries of ancient times. Before we proceed to describe those of modern days, we shall offer a few remarks on the extent of ancient as compared with modern collections of books. The National Library of Paris contains upwards of 824,000 volumes and is the largest in existence.

The number of writers, and consequently of books, in the bright days of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, could not have been very great. It must, on the contrary, have been limited by various causes, which contributed powerfully to retard the composition of new works, and prevent the multiplication of new editions. In fact, the histories of cities and of nations, together with descriptions of the earth, which have become exhaustless sources for the writers of modern times, must have been but sterile themes at a period in which history was confined within the limits of a few centuries, and hardly a sixth part of the world now known had been discovered. Add to these considerations the difficulties of communication, by which the inhabitants of different countries, and often those of different sections of the same country were kept apart, together with the arts and sciences which were either wholly unknown, or confined within very narrow bounds, and it will become evident, that for every thirty or forty authors of the present day, ancient Europe could hardly have supported one or two.

Another circumstance which may be adduced in support of our proposition, is the fact, that an increase in the number of readers leads to a proportionate augmentation in the number of works prepared for their gratification. We have every reason to suppose that the reading class of the ancient world was small in comparison

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with that of the modern. Even sitting aside the circumstance of the narrow limits by which the creative literature of ancient Europe was bounded—Greece and Rome being almost the only nations whence new productions were derived—we shall still be constrained to acknowledge the vast distance which separates the creative literary power of modern from that of ancient times. Our schools, which abound with such a variety of class-books upon every subject, bear little or no resemblance to those of Greece or Rome; nor can the text-books prepared for our universities be brought into comparison with the oral instructions of the old philosophers.

Passing by, also, the subjects which have been opened to our research by the discoveries of modern science, and confining our attention to the single branch of philosophy, in the old sense of the word, which has always been more or less studied and disputed upon since the days of the earliest Greeks, we shall probably find that the productions of any one modern school outnumber those of the whole body of Greek philosophers. How much more would the balance lean towards the modern, were we to add all the varieties of the French, German, English, and Scottish schools, to say nothing of those whose tenacious subtleties have procured them the name of schoolmen! If, going a step farther, we consider that reading, which the peculiar cast of modern civilization has classed among the luxuries of life, is one of those luxuries, in the enjoyment of which all classes come in for a share, we shall find here also a wide distinction between ancient times and our own.

During that epoch of splendid decay, in which the immense wealth of the Roman senators was found insufficient to satisfy the longing for the new forms of stimulant and of pleasure, their reading, as we are told by Ammianus Marcellinus, a contemporary historian, was confined to the writings of Marius Maximus and Juvenal. What would they have not given for a modern novel, or to what unlimited extent would the imagination have poured forth its fantastic creations had the art of printing been at hand to keep pace with the productive powers of the mind, and the cravings of a morbid intellect? On every score, therefore, the numerical difference between the intellectual wealth of ancient and of modern Europe must have been decidedly in favour of the latter.

The high price of the materials for writing, and the difficulty of procuring them, must also have been a great obstacle to the multiplication of books. When copies could only be procured by the slow and expensive process of transcription, it seems impossible to suppose that a large number could have been usually prepared of any ordinary work. Those of our readers who are aware that only about 450 copies of the celebrated Princeps editions were struck off, will readily assent to the correctness of this opinion. The barbarous system of ancient warfare must have also caused

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the destruction of a great many works, raised the price of others, and rendered extremely difficult, not to say impossible, the accumulation of a very large number in one place. The difficulties which the bibliomaniacs of our own times encounter in procuring copies of the editions of the fifteenth century and the extravagant prices at which some of them have been sold, are enough to show how small a part of an entire edition has been able to pass safely through the short space of four centuries. How few copies, then, of a work written in the time of Alexander could have reached the age of Augustus or of Trajan! With facts like these before us, how can we talk of libraries of 700,000 or 800,000 volumes in the ancient world? When we find it is so difficult at the present day, in spite of the testimony of intelligent travellers, and of all the advantages we possess for making our estimates to ascertain the truth with regard to the great libraries of modern Europe, how can we give credit to the contradictory and exaggerated statements which were promulgated in ages of the darkest ignorance concerning ancient Rome and Alexandria? "After a careful examination of this subject," says that eminent bibliographer, M. Balbi, "it seems to me improbable, if I should not rather say impossible, that any library of ancient Europe, or of the middle ages, could have contained more than 300,000 or 400,000 volumes. But even allowing 700,000 volumes to the largest of the Alexandrian libraries—that, namely, of which a great part was accidentally destroyed during the wars of Julius Cæsar—allowing the same number to the library of Tripoli, and to that of Cairo; and admitting that the third library of Alexandria contained 600,000 volumes, and the Ulpian of Rome, and the Cordovan founded by Al-Hakem, an equal number—it will still be easy to show that the whole amount of one of these was not equal to even a fifth part of a library composed of printed books."

It is well known that the volumes of ancient libraries consisted of rolls, which generally were written only on one side. Thus the written surface of one of these volumes would correspond to but one half the written surface of one of our books, of which every page is covered with letters. A library then, composed of 100,000 rolls would contain no more matter than one of our libraries composed of 50,000 manuscripts. It is well known, also, that a work was divided into as many rolls as the books which it contained. Thus the Natural History of Pliny, which in the Princeps edition of Venice, forms but one folio volume, would, since it is divided into thirty-seven books, have formed thirty-seven rolls or volumes. If it were possible to compare elements of so different a nature, we should say that these rolls might be compared to the sheets of our newspapers, or to the numbers of our weekly serials. What would become of the great library of Paris were we to suppose its 824,000 volumes in folio, quarto, &c.,

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to be but so many numbers of five or six sheets each? Yet this is the rule by which we ought to estimate the literary wealth of the great libraries of ancient times; and "hence" says M. Balbi, "notwithstanding the imposing array of authorities which can be brought against us, we must persist in believing that no library of antiquity or of the middle ages, can be considered as equivalent to a modern one of 100,000 or 110,000 volumes."

No one of the libraries of the first-class now in existence dates beyond the fifteenth century. The Vatican, the origin of which has been frequently carried back to the days of St. Hilarius, in 465, cannot, with any propriety, be said to have deserved the name of library before the reign of Pope Martin V., by whose order it was removed in 1417 from Avignon to Rome. And even then a strict attention to exactitude would require us to withhold from it this title, until the period of its final organisation by Nicholas V., in 1447. It is difficult to speak with certainty concerning the libraries, whether public or private, supposed to have existed previous to the fifteenth century, both on account of the doubtful authority and indefiniteness of the passages in which they are mentioned, and the custom which so readily obtained in those dark ages of dignifying with the name of library every petty collection of insignificant codices. But many libraries of the fifteenth century being in existence, and others having been preserved long enough to make them the subject of historical inquiry before their dissolution, it becomes easier to fix, with satisfactory accuracy, the date of their foundation. We find, accordingly, that during the fifteenth century ten libraries were formed—the Vatican at Rome, the Laurentian at Florence, the Imperial of Vienna and Ratisbon, the University at Turin, the Malatestiana at Cesena, the Marciana at Venice, the Bodleian at Oxford, the University at Copenhagen, and the City at Frankfort-on-the-Maine. The Palatine of Heidelberg was founded in 1390, dispersed in 1623, restored in 1652, and augmented in 1816. The increase of the libraries of Europe has generally been slowly progressive, although there have been periods of sudden augmentation in nearly all of them. They began with a small number of manuscripts, sometimes with a few, and often without any printed works. To these, gradual accessions were made from the different sources, which have always been more or less at the command of sovereigns and nobles. In 1455 the Vatican contained 5,000 manuscripts. In 1685, after an interval of more than two centuries, the number of its manuscripts had only risen to 16,000, and that of the printed volumes did not exceed 25,000. In 1789, but little more than a century later, the number of manuscripts had been doubled, and the printed volumes amounted to 40,000. Far different was the progress of the Royal, or as it is now called the National Library of Paris. The origin of this institution is placed in the year 1595—the date of its removal from Fontaine-

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bleau to Paris, by order of Henry IV. In 1660 it contained only 1,435 printed volumes. In the course of the following year this number was raised to 16,746, both printed volumes and manuscripts. During the ensuing eight years the library was nearly doubled, and before the close of the subsequent century, it was supposed to have been augmented by upwards of 100,000 volumes. In most cases the chief sources of these augmentations have been individual legacies and the purchase of private collections. Private libraries, as our readers are doubtless well aware, began to be formed long before public ones were thought of. Like these, they have their origin in the taste, or caprice, or necessities of their founders, and are of more or less value, as one or the other of these motives has presided over their formation. But when formed by private students, with a view to bring together all that has been written upon some single branch of science, or by amateurs skilled in the principles of bibliography, they become more satisfactory and complete than they could possibly be made under any other circumstances. Few of them, however, are preserved long after the death of the original collector; but falling into the hands of heirs possessed of different tastes and feelings, are either sold off by auction or restored to the shelves of the bookseller. It was by availing themselves of such opportunities that the directors of the public libraries of Europe made their most important acquisitions. This is, in short, the history of the Imperial Library at Vienna, and it can hardly be necessary to add that it was thus that the rarest and most valuable portions of that collection were brought together. It was thus also that the Vatican acquired, some twenty years ago, by the purchase of the library of Count Cicognara, a body of materials illustrative of the history of the arts, which leaves comparatively little to be wished for by the most diligent historian.

It can hardly be necessary to enlarge upon this subject. Every one who has engaged, even in a small degree, in historical researches, must have observed how soon he gets out of the track of common readers, and how dark and difficult his way becomes, unless he chance to meet with some guide among those who, confining their attention to a single branch of study, have become familiar with, and gathered around them almost everything which can serve to throw light upon it. And when a public institution has gone on through a long course of years adding to the works derived from other sources these carefully chosen stores of the learned, it is easy to conceive how much it must contribute not merely towards the gratification of literary curiosity, but to the actual progress of literature.

A. T. SIBBALD.

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SILVERMEAD.

CHAPTER XXI.

HERE is Mr. Cyril Acton's first letter to Camilla.

"MY DEAR MISS CAMILLA,

"If you had given me any hint of the purport of your letter to my friend Brudenell I fancy I should have written to expostulate with you, or, at least, asked you to reconsider its contents before forwarding it to him. Old friends as we are, I think you would have forgiven me such a step had you known all its motives.

"With my deep, deep regard for your character and person, you cannot conceive what I endure at the bare thought that *any one*, however favoured by you—and indeed the more so on that account—can venture to treat you otherwise than you deserve. I need not, I am sure, ask you to glance at the past, to feel certain there is no danger of your thinking me a *mauvaise langue*. If, then, I tell you facts that are not to the credit of him to whom I know you have lent an encouraging ear, it is not merely that you have the best right to be informed of them; but they are for the most part public acts, known to everybody in town, and only blameworthy if they injure you. But if your letter to Mr. Brudenell was to express no change of mind—to break off any engagement there may have been between you—I can well understand how superfluous what I am going to say must appear. Enough for me that you *may* wish to read it. If Mr. Brudenell's doings have become a matter of indifference to you, pray tear up this letter without reading another line. To be sure, I think if you had broken with him you would have told me so in your letters, because when you favoured his suit you honoured me with your confidence."

When the young man had penned thus far, he paused for a considerable time to reflect. Should he or should he not set down imaginary conversations between himself and Horace? The danger of doing so was glaringly apparent, but exactly on that account did it fascinate him. Prudence was his favourite virtue, but was it prudent to omit the chief means of making his letters interesting to Camilla? Let him but widen the breach which already separated them, and how could they ever meet to compare notes? Brudenell was evidently on the eve of engaging himself

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to Lady Susan Graye, and so long as Acton could induce Camilla either to hold no communication with her late lover or to make himself her postman, there was no prospect of anything occurring to break off the new engagement.

Camilla's letter to Horace had taught Acton how desperate, almost frenzied, the girl might become, and that there were few measures to which she would not resort ere she succumbed to her fate in despair.

Yes, everything depended on now monopolising her confidence, on taking care she made no step without his advice, or, at least, knowledge. None know better than impostors the value of the proverb "Nothing venture, nothing have." He took another dip of ink and wrote on.

"Although I had left your letter at his club with my own hands, it was, I felt, too sacred a trust to admit of any risk; so meeting Mr. Brudenell a day later—it was at a dinner party given by our friends the De Basles—I drew my chair next to his when the ladies left the table, and this is almost word for word what passed. I said:

"'I left a letter at your club yesterday, from Miss Harding.'

"A cloud instantly came over his brow.

"'O, you left it. It was kind of you to take the trouble.'

"'Miss Harding did not know your address.'

"'Ah, to be sure. You—you are a great friend of hers, I believe?'

"'I am proud to say, I am. I have known her from a child.'

"He seemed to hesitate for some moments, then he said constrainedly:

"'As that is the case, I need not apologise for troubling you with a few words about her. The fact is, I don't think I have behaved to her—very well.'

"'Indeed!'

"I said that word severely yet not so as to shut him up, for I wanted him to go on.

"He said:

"'I think when I have told you how it was, you will see I am now acting for the best; and without giving her a message, mind, you might say you thought it best to let her know how I looked at the thing.'

"'Yes, pray go on.'

"'Well, my uncle, Sir Howard, has other matrimonial views for me which I need not particularise. These were known and partly accepted by me before that ball at Hasham, where I first had the pleasure of meeting you.'

"I nodded.

"'That evening I had a deuce of a flirtation with the little girl——'

"'I beg your pardon?'

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"'With Miss Harding—I beg hers—I fancy I had had too much champagne. I know we talked—I talked—a lot of rubbish; in short, it seems she says—I proposed to her.'

"'And then?'

"'Well, of course, the thing is absurd—a mere after supper mistake. I don't mind telling you, I am quite dependent on my uncle. He wishes me to marry Lady Sue—to marry a bride of his own choice! there is nothing for it but to obey. Now, I always think, you know, "The least said, soonest mended." And that is the reason I attempted no explanation with *your amusing little friend*, and if you like, tell her so—that is why I haven't thought it wise to answer her *rather gushing letter*.'

"Dearest Miss Camilla, words cannot describe to you what it costs me to send you these expressions. I quiver with rage as I pen them; I frankly own that I sat dumb, making no sign whatever. I did not trust myself to move or speak; I remembered, thank Heaven, where I was.

"Presently he said:

"'My marriage will be announced in a few days, and I am sure Miss Harding will see it in the *Morning Post* with no great perturbation.'

"Then a general move to the drawing-room was made, and no more was said.

"Very probably you have heard by this time that the lady to whom this man is paying his very confident and conspicuous addresses, is no other than your friend Lady Susan Graye, and I must say she smiles most unmistakably upon his suit—poor thing! Ah, she little knows him!

"It is some comfort to me to think that your proper pride, of which you had always so much, will from this time prevent your ever feeling anything but contempt for one who has proved so utterly unworthy of so much as a passing thought from you, and whom I shall in future treat with the barest civility.

"Excuse the undue length of this letter, I could not make it shorter and write as I feel from my heart. Command me always and in all things, and believe me,

"Your devoted friend,

"CYRIL ACTON.

"P.S.—Your good father is well. I see him often and will speak more of him in my next letter. He has been prosperous of late."

The only true particle of this epistle was that the writer had met at dinner, at the De Basle's, the man into whose mouth he was shamelessly cramming all the foul inventions of his own base mind; but only a few words on the commonest generalities had passed between them, the very name of Miss Harding, it is needless to say, never being so much as breathed by either.

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After that dinner party Mrs. De Basle had a reception, which, as the papers said, was brilliantly attended. She was a woman about whom, even if she played a significant part in this history, there would be little to say. She owed what importance she had solely to her husband's position and abilities. The daughter of a not very celebrated law lord, she was neither highly gifted nor absolutely stupid, had been originally indebted for what entity she possessed to the fact of her being merely a pretty woman. As she was now fifty, she had become a nonentity, for of course she was no longer pretty. She knew how to receive, and dressed rather well; she was wife of the Right Honourable Courtenay De Basle, M.P., and there was an end of it. They were a very happy though childless couple, and she managed never even to make enemies, which some men might have thought implied inferiority, but her husband was delighted with it.

The party, like all other parties, was a success, and nobody was bored because perhaps nothing was done to amuse them. The De Basles paid their guests the compliment of supposing them equal to entertaining one another.

Oh, those concerts, recitations and the like! Suppose you hate such things, or have before heard the present individual, and do not approve the talent. You are talking very likely, expressly not to hear, having retired for the purpose to what you consider an amply well-bred distance. In vain! Some more or less deputed hanger-on of the house seems to run after you through the crowd, bent on shouting sh—sh— into your ear!

No such drawbacks were present to-night, an occasion on which we came across several old acquaintances whom we have not met for some time.

There are various ways of showing you are in the best society; the de Basles did so by proving to the world that they could afford to ask whom they pleased.

It was not merely a stray Italian singing-master, or British sculptor with a foreign-looking head of hair, but they would have at any of their routs whole families of people you seldom meet elsewhere, thoroughly nice, well-bred people, but who were not otherwise in the first flight. No, the De Basles were not fine. They would have thought it vulgar to be fine. Yet they received and went to the very finest people in London, and out of it.

Imitate then, if you wish it, by all means, but do not be above a word of warning.

Begin at the right, that is at the difficult end, otherwise your aviary will be invaded by all the wild fowl of the air, and the sky birds of dazzling plumage will never come to be fed at all!

The worst that can be said of the De Basle receptions is, that they are rather crowded, but this even is hypercriticism, for the house—a real mansion, not merely a house-agent's mansion—is very large, and the staircase as wide as a narrow street; so that those very

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people who, for something to say, exclaim, "What a crush," would be the first to set these parties down as "rather thinly attended" if some fifty guests less happened to be present.

It wants half-an-hour of midnight, and the evening is at its height.

To have done with disagreeables first, there is that horrid Miss Laffinch. She is actually staying in the house to the great disgust of its owners, but she wrote to say a near and dear relation who lay dangerously ill had implored her to come and receive her last breath, and Miss Laffinch declared she could not afford an hotel, so the De Basles gave her leave to come to them for a couple of nights. She has been there ten days, yet her mysterious relation seems to decline either to die as promised, or to get well.

Better and worse she does get, just as the old maid wishes to avoid some dull ceremony, or to take part in a gay one. She has got hold of Sir Howard to-night and trades on his good breeding to make him do the civil. She wishes people to think he is showing her attention, being perfectly aware all the time that he is only looking out for the first plausible pretext to shake her off. She is always going into ecstasies over the Baronet's Chesterfieldean manners, while secretly despising both him and all others who allow her to impose upon them, or to continue to be coerced by their habitual considerations of delicacy in dealing with an individual who has none.

It is instructive to note what a number of victims a person utterly devoid of delicacy can find ready to be sacrificed, especially in good society. Some are easily deceived by specious excuses, some, though less thoroughly hoodwinked, are too good natured to rebel, while probably the largest class of victims owe their being so to sheer apathy, or their dread of a row.

"Yes, and you were saying?" said Sir Howard, actually finding himself manœuvred into taking a seat at the harpy's side.

"Oh, my dear friend, such an escape! A horrid little minx, believe me."

"You surprise me! From the little I have seen of her I own I thought her charm——"

"Don't you know why? Then I'll tell you. She was acting to you because she wants your nephew. Poor darling boy! Oh, what an escape, Sir Howard!" and here she struck him quite hard with her fan, which made him shy. "I got you both out of that. Oh, I warned poor Horace. Oh, he was far farther gone than you think!"

"I remember your saying something——"

"Oh, law, I didn't tell you half. You know my hatred of tattling, so cautious what I say. But I can tell you now."

"Well, now it is all over, and I don't in——"

"Oh, but I wish it. You *shall* hear. It was all over the county. You know young Acton?"

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"Lord Hammersley's son, yes."

"A dear fellow. A very loveable boy. Well, Miss Harding got hold of him and kept him always dangling after her, poor young man! Oh, bless you, Sir Howard, she's a very old hand, and, frightful as it may appear, acted when only a mere child as decoy at her horrid old father's gambling parties."

"Miss Laffinch, I tell you plainly, I do not believe——"

"You never do, you never do! Dear friend, you are so innocent. Oh, I love you for it, but you ought to go and live in a planet! you ought indeed!"

Miss Laffinch's astronomy evidently does not embrace the fact of our Earth being one.

"I see a woman over there I particularly want to speak to," urged her companion, "and if you will excuse me," he was about to rise, she pulled him down by the arm.

"One moment, and you shall take me across the room with you. I have been over to Silvermead lately a good deal. I love the dear old lady. Well, at first I wanted to be kind to that brazen chit of a girl, merely with the thought that I might reclaim her. And then she was looking so ill."

"I thought her pale, poor girl, the day I was there."

"Oh, pasty! quite dough and water. Yes. Haven't you noticed how those flirty girls always collapse and go to pieces unless they've a man at their heels? Well, will you believe it? when I came to condole with her, in the most delicate and vague way, upon our dear Horace's departure, she positively snapped my nose off."

And the old wretch began scratching that decidedly rubicund member, as though it tingled at the bare metaphor.

"I hope she did," thought Sir Howard, rather amused, but he only said, "Indeed."

"Oh, she was most insolent, and I feel certain now that those shocking reports about her and young Acton——"

Here she suddenly lowered her voice and poured its venom into the very pouches of Sir Howard's ear. But, with your leave, we will pass on, as, judging from what she says aloud, her conversation will not be fit to listen to when she whispers.

Acton and Jack Forbes met on the staircase; the former going to a ball, the latter just arrived at Mrs. De Basle's reception.

"Oh, cousin Jack, whence do you hail? You have never come to see me as you promised."

It was part of Acton's plan to cultivate "cousin Jack," as he calls him. *Should anything happen* he knows it will be safer to have him predisposed in his favour. They had hardly ever met previous to Acton's visit to ——shire.

"Why, I go about very little. I am working for the Bar. I came to-night because I thought it so good of Mrs. De Basle to think of me. I had not called."

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"Yes. I gave her your address. I say, old fellow, dine with me to-morrow at eight, will you?"

"I shall be very happy. At your rooms?"

"Yes. Ta-ta."

And as Acton when down and out, he thought: "Hate the expense of a dinner, but this is business and I must do it well. Don't know, though, perhaps he'd be more flattered at being treated as a relation, a bit of fish and a steak. Yes, that's it. He doesn't seem a bad sort of devil. Dear me, to think that at my dad's death that fellow becomes a viscount with eighteen thousand a year! If he knew it! It wouldn't be a bad idea to poison him to-morrow. Splendid opportunity, only dangerous, and then I've got no poison. With him out of the way the title would really become extinct, but for me, and it would be no one's interest to show me up."

Then more brightly:

"Doesn't look as if he'd require much of a quieter. Jove, I never saw a fellow look so seedy! Deuced awkward his going in for the Bar, too. A lawyer has fifty opportunities of——"

But here his cogitations were cut short by his arrival at the ball, and two minutes later he was whirling round some sweet little girl who imagined herself in the arms of a Christian and a gentleman.

Had she not seen him devout at church last Sunday?

To return to our rout.

Lady Fouroaks, dressed in the brightest colours, has just arrived and with an unconscionably long train of relations and friends. She banters them all the way up the stately stairs, and her words and laughter sound gaily above the hum, like the soprano in a comic operatic finale.

"You *would* have us, you know, dear friend," she says, shaking hands with her hostess. "I told you unless you would have our entire dinner-party we couldn't come. Listen, your butler is telling you their names, the list is too long for me."

"Delighted, delighted to see any number of your friends, they are always charming."

And even as she speaks Mrs. De Basle is bowing welcome to one after another.

When they have passed in, Lady Fouroaks says to her hostess, lowering her voice:

"A queer-looking lot, some of them, eh? Friends of Fouroaks; you know he is scientific. As for that foreigner, my dear, in the short hair and blue spectacles, though he brought a letter from someone in Wallachia, I'm certain he's a thief in disguise, and I advise you to have him watched as to the spoons; ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, I think I will risk it. I did not catch his name."

"I'll tell you another day. It is such a long one, I have only studied the first four syllables. Ha, ha ha! Oh, Mr. Brudenell,

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how do you do? I want to talk to you. Why we haven't met since the Hasham ball. So sorry to have been out when you called."

"I was very sorry. I hope your daughters are——"

"Oh, quite, thanks, there they are over there. Let me see, what was it? O, yes, what has become of my little pet, Miss Harding? I never saw a man so smitten as you were that night."

"Um—Miss Harding—" said Horace, his face clouding, "I—I have never seen her since—to speak to——"

"You don't tell me so! What, forgotten already! Oh, you young men! Well, I am astonished, for I thought it was a case. You shall take me down for an ice."

"She is a very pretty fascinating girl, no doubt," said Horace, giving his arm, but speaking in an absent, grave way, which puzzled Lady Fouroaks.

"And do you know," pursued the latter, as they went down, "I thought she was as far gone as you were. All the way home we couldn't get a word out of her, and when my girls chaffed her about you next day—you know what we are, we all say what comes uppermost, whether people like it or not, ha, ha!—when Mabel and Adela joked about it next morning, she looked miserable for a moment, and——Oh dear me, here are Lord Caulfield, and Lady Susan. How do you do? how do you do? Just come—No—what going, really? Good-night then."

Horace, who had been talking to Lady Susan up to the time he met Lady Fouroaks, felt he had sufficiently done his duty for the night in that quarter.

Besides he could not in common decency leave his present companion standing, ice in hand, at the buffet, even to ask for the other lady's carriage. Much to his surprise, he found himself so interested in Lady Fouroaks' narration as to be quite irritated at having it interrupted, although the persons to do it were his intended bride and her noble father. Before they were out of sight, he said:

"Yes, then you were saying— —"

"Dear me, what was I saying?"

"About—your daughters."

"My daughters? No surely," and the somewhat scatter-brained little woman was really at sea.

"And Miss Harding."

"Oh, I remember. Yes, when my thoughtless girls chaffed her, she burst into tears."

"Tears?"

"Oh, torrents!"

"Never!"

"Yes, yes; you know she did not see they were joking. Adela kept abusing you, all in fun, you know. And fancy your forgetting her so soon; it's quite—ha, ha, ha!—enough to shake

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one's faith in—what a funny looking picture that is over there. Sacred, isn't it?—to shake one's—would you mind taking me up to the drawing-room, I must really see how my scratch pack are behaving themselves, ha, ha, ha!"

Chapter XXII.

Horace Brudenell was having his first London season in the fullest sense of the word.

Was he enjoying it? Was he happy?

That is another thing. But I should say that he was both in a fair degree.

Had he had a dream of the truth, no earthly allurement could have kept him an hour from flying back to his love at Silvermead, but as it was, although he still often bewailed his departed vision, the living Camilla had almost ceased to occupy his thoughts.

It seems hard to say so, but the chances are, that if, before he had ceased to believe in her, this fair young girl had died, it would not have taken very long for his youth and worldly advantages to so far conquer his grief as to make life more than bearable, especially life of a gay and exciting kind. *Que voulez vous?*

It is of no use painting persons and things as they are not. Horace was but two-and-twenty, and of the male sex.

If old battered votaries of fashion still find distraction and a certain amount of pleasure in the brilliant dinner-party, the crowded ride, the opera and the studio, after far more seasons than they willingly own to, surely due allowance must be made for the effect of these things upon the virgin impressionability of a youthful mind, and youthful pulses.

Shunning the dependence of rooms, Horace finally settled, with his uncle's approval, upon a small house in Chapel Street, Park Lane, for which he is to pay fifteen guineas a week, and, excellently furnished as it is, he has reason to be pleased with his bargain.

To-day, Jack Forbes is lunching with him. Needless to say that before leaving Massing, Horace told his old friend every detail of that midnight pilgrimage of his, and of the momentous changes wrought thereby in his heart and projects. But since they have been up in London, the very name of Camilla Harding has by tacit consent never so much as been breathed between them.

"Why, Jack," says the host, "you are still off your feed. You haven't been falling in love, have you?"

"Ha, ha, that is a luxury we poor devils don't go in for! No, it's my breath; I cannot get right."

"Jack, I tell you again, you ought to see some one."

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"What, send for a doctor when I am well enough to go about, to ride your horses, and eat—well, no, I don't eat much."

"Own that you have never been the same man since that day you tumbled into the pond—I beg my relation's pardon—the lake at home."

"I admit it, I have shivering fits once or twice a week; but in this hot weather I suppose I shall shake them off in a few days."

"Jack, I don't want to alarm you heedlessly, but you look ill—very ill. Your loss of appetite is a bad sign."

"It is too absurd," said Jack with much bitterness, "that a strong young chap like me can't take an involuntary dip in cold water without being knocked up. Why you and Lady Caulfield were none the worse!"

"You forget, we were not heated at the time, while you had been having a scamper with the greyhounds."

"I never thought of that. Yes, to be sure, I was a bit hot."

"Well," said Horace, "there's the whole point. Just you see a doctor before you are a day older, for my sake if not for your own. Now, as you won't eat, and I have finished, let us stroll across the park to the Caulfield's. Jack, I think I shall propose to-day."

"I am surprised."

"Why?"

"I thought you had done that long ago. Anyhow, it is a mere form."

"Well, Jack, it's no use playing the modest to you, I suppose it's as good as settled," and quite unconsciously Brudenell heaved a sigh.

"Of course you know I wish you all happiness, and all that."

"Thanks, old feller—awfully."

They took their hats and issued forth. The day was very hot for May, but it failed to warm poor Forbes.

"Jack," said Horace, "I am so glad—I mean more than usual—to have you with me to-day. I feel you give me courage."

Forbes was so astonished that he stood still, as foreigners are wont to do when conversation grows earnest.

"I shouldn't have thought you wanted any," he said. "Why you confess——"

"I know, I know," pursued the jolly, thriving wooer, as they walked on, "about being accepted, and all that, but——"

"But?"

"Well, of course, I have quite made up my mind. I have promised uncle Howard, and all that—and then, anyhow it would be very dishonourable after the marked attentions I have shown her——"

"I think I understand."

"Oh, I like Lady Susan very much—very much indeed, I assure you."

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"I am so glad. I thought perhaps——"

"No, no, it isn't that. I suppose it is the irrevocableness of the step that rather staggers me. I have only felt this when I have come to the actual point, to speak the precise words: 'Will you have me?' and that is why I have been putting it off—weakly, I think—from day to day."

"If you fear you may regret it, I should put it off now."

"What would be the use? It must come, I tell you. But, Jack, old man, I want to ask you: Do you believe that one ought to listen to a perfectly unfounded, unreasonable instinct? for such I feel within me now prompting me not to engage myself to Lady Susan."

"My dear Horace, it is really a groundless instinct. For my own part I have often refrained from some step simply from such a feeling, and discovered later on that I had all along some excellent reason which happened to have lain hidden the while in some fold of my consciousness."

"It may be so; and yet, if we ruled our lives upon such subtleties, it strikes me there would be endless hesitation, and—no, my mind's made up. I think I shall be more at peace when deliberation is beyond my power. Do you entertain Lady Caulfield—lure her away to some distance—but, my dear fellow, good gracious!"

And he seized his companion vigorously by both elbows, and almost lifted him to a friendly bench in the shade.

Forbes had turned as white as a sheet, and but for Horace must have fallen.

A few minutes' rest, however, and he recovered, or nearly so.

"What was it? what did you feel?"

"Only a giddiness. I suppose it is the sun."

"Jack, I am seriously alarmed about you. I shall send my own doctor to you this very day. As a favour to myself you must see him."

"As you please, but I think it is absurd."

"Would you rather have a cab home and not come to Belgrave Square?"

"On no account! You forget I am to make love to the mama." Jack said this with quite a gleam of his old humour, but he was glad enough of his friend's arm during the rest of their short walk.

Horace had promised Lady Susan to look in early, and accordingly they found the ladies expecting them.

A more observant lover might have seen a slight shade cross Lady Susan's white brow on seeing Jack Forbes. But it was only caused by the reflection that bringing company—even the *fidus Achates*—hardly looked promising for the hoped for result of the rather pointedly arranged visit.

"Why, my dear Mr. Forbes," said Lady Caulfield, "how pale

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you are! Do have a glass of sherry, but, of course, you have lunched?"

This led to a little chat which made poor Jack quite confused at the importance he had suddenly acquired, all from feeling slightly unwell. It was the charm of this thoroughly good fellow, so solicitous for others never to think himself of any consequence. He declined the sherry, however, having indeed no inclination for it, but presently drank it so that so much trouble might not be thrown away.

Lady Caulfield soon decided that Jack had never been well since she upset him and herself into the water, and, naturally enough, she felt a strong interest in his case.

The quartette spontaneously broke up into a double *tête-à-tête*, and Horace gathered himself together for the grand plunge. It was more difficult than he thought for. Here was a girl evidently quite ready to be proposed to, and a young man who was bent upon asking the momentous question, yet, probably from the very cold bloodedness of the thing, Horace felt too shy and awkward to put his purpose into words.

There is always something absurd in going through a mere form, to any one, at least, with as keen a sense of the ridiculous as had our hero. Once or twice he thought he would still put the business off, because it might be easier to do so by candle light. Then he felt ashamed of being deterred by such a trifle as the sun.

Besides there was Forbes. Why—what would he say, this candid friend Jack, when they got back into the street, on hearing that the proposal still hung fire?

That great resource in Lady Susan's character, her being a tolerable musician, now recurred to Horace's mind, and he jumped at the idea.

"Dear Lady Susan," he said, "do come and warble to me, nothing grand or troublesome, but just one of those dreamy soothing things I am so fond of."

She complied at once, perhaps divining his object, and chose that sweet old song: "Where Shall the Lover Rest?"

But it certainly did not soothe Horace, though it filled him with a sort of desperation which very likely did quite as well. It sent his thoughts galloping back to Camilla and his proposal to her. Oh, how indescribably different were the two cases! Then his words had risen in spite of him. Firmly determined to do nothing of the kind, he had not only asked Camilla to be his, but made her the most passionate appeal, he knew not how. This time his will was resolutely bent to the deed, and yet his lips would not move!

When the ditty ended, Lady Susan turned her classic head intuitively, and with her old changeless smile, said:

"Well?"

Her wooer started and came back from cloudland with a most

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confused look on his handsome face. To be sure it might mean anything, and her ladyship no doubt attributed the strange expression to some feeling flattering to herself.

"Charming, charming," he stammered.

"I don't think I ever sang you that one before."

"I am quite sure you never did."

She continued to go over the air with her right hand. There was an awkward pause.

Presently she said:

"I hope Mr. Forbes is not really unwell?"

"I rather fear he is," said Horace. "You remember our boating accident—that comic-tragic affair at Massing? He has never been well since."

Then they went over that exhausted theme again, laughing a little and getting through a certain portion of time, during which they were supposed to be flirting.

Still this was not proposing.

Even the easy-going Lady Susan began to lose patience, and went so far as to ask herself:

"Can all that papa and mamma have told me have been wrong? Is this man not making up to me after all? What is he waiting for? Has he not eyes to see?"

She was very fond of him certainly, but if he really meant nothing—oh, it was too absurd! What would the world say?

And warm as the day was, a cold shiver ran down the poor girl's back.

"I wish I knew something," she said to him at last.

"Can I tell you?"

"Yes—and no one else."

"What is it?"

He was trying to be very tender.

"I don't like to say," and still she toyed with the keys. "Guess."

"I am so stupid."

"I don't find you so."

"Never?"

"No."

"I want to know something too."

"If you will tell me yours, I'll tell you mine."

"Which first?" he asked.

"Oh, you begin."

"I thought it was always ladies first."

"Not in these sort of things, not when they elect to be second Come, speak——"

"I don't dare. Let us both speak at once."

"Don't be so silly." Presently she changed her mind, saying

"I don't mind telling you first.

She hung down her head and pursued:

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"I wonder why you come to see me so often."

"Because it delights me."

"Does it?"

"Beyond words. Now I'll put my question, a little altered. Do you dislike my coming?"

"You know I don't; but why does it delight you?"

He took her hand off the notes and held it.

"Because I love you."

"Oh!"

"Did you not know it?"

"I hoped it."

"And you will be my wife?"

"Yes!"

There! It was done! Over! Rather like a surgical operation, perhaps; and, had there been a looker-on, somewhat wanting in true ring, at least on the part of one of the actors; but, under the circumstances, really the little scene had been very creditably got through.

The announcement of the carriage came opportunely enough to save Horace from any more love-making just at present. Forbes felt better, he said, under Lady Caulfield's solicitous ministrations, and the young men took their leave, not without Horace promising to join the ladies at the opera in the evening.

When the time came, however, the last act of "Le Roi de Lahore" was well on ere he entered their box. Both mother and daughter were highly indignant at this seeming negligence, and were wondering what Horace could possibly urge in excuse for such remissness on the very day he had been accepted. The moment he appeared, however, their anger died out. He looked so pale and grave that they saw at once something very serious had happened.

He announced to them that his friend Forbes was much worse, in fact in a raging fever, already quite delirious, and with two eminent doctors attending him. Horace had spent the whole evening at his bedside.

"Dear, dear," said Lady Caulfield, glancing at her daughter's fine form apologetically, "it seems so selfish to ask, but it is nothing contagious?"

"I should say not," replied Horace, "at any rate not to the extent of my endangering you."

"Oh, but do take care on your own account, Horace," said Lady Susan, asserting for the first time, her new position of a promised bride, by using his first name alone.

"And where is he?" pursued the mamma.

"I made him come home to dinner with me. We were alone. He ate next to nothing, and just as I was proposing to join you, he grew suddenly worse, complained of violent pain in the head, and began to shiver. He sent for his doctor, Sir Ewing Crofton,

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and I for mine. Meanwhile, having plenty of room, I insisted on his staying in Chapel Street, as I thought he would be more comfortable, and besides, he seemed too bad to be moved needlessly."

"At your house?" said his *fiancée*. "Oh, how very imprudent. I admire you for it, of course, but had you not better yourself go elsewhere till we know what is the matter?"

"No," said Horace, simply but firmly. "I haven't many friends, and I intend to stand by Jack and see him through. At the same time if you are at all afraid I will do myself the cruelty of keeping away from your most valued society. I should be miserable to cause you any unnecessary alarm. Even now if you fancy there is danger——"

And he half rose from his seat. However, of course, the ladies would not allow him to go.

When Horace got home an hour later, the doctors had sent in an experienced nurse—a woman of mature years, and left word they would return at nine next morning, that no sort of improvement could be looked for for some days.

Chapter XXIII.

A little more than a week later, Cyril Acton received the following letter from the unhappy girl at Silvermead. Her father chanced to be with him when it arrived, but the young tactician slipped the missive into his pocket, with one or two others for private perusal, that he might deliberate before saying anything about it to his dear Cave, who was already standing up to go.

The latter is radiant to-day, and wears a carnation in his buttonhole.

"Well, well, dear boy, I must be off to Newmarket. Think I can show my nose at last. Squared most of the implacable ones, thanks to you, and my recent little winnings. There's the 'Beau' may turn nasty, and little 'Hogshead,' they say, swears he'll give no quarter, but I must risk it; always time to bow myself out if needs be."

"But I thought you said there was nothing worth backing to-day."

"Nor is there, Cyril; no, for once I go to Newmarket for other game. *She* is to be there."

"She, who? Oh, I remember the new flame you were talking of yesterday. A pretty grass widow, you said."

"Pretty, sir! Gad, she's the finest thing in England! Monstrous handsome 'pon my honour she is!"

"I know, the one you met at an hotel at Scarborough, and who wouldn't speak to you till you got the parson to introduce you."

And Acton, who was getting bored, and longing to read his

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letters, pulled out his watch under the thin pretence of comparing its time with that of the clock on the mantelpiece, but really to hurry Mr. Harding away. The latter who had plenty of tact—a small compensating virtue which often goes with the vice of gambling—hereupon withdrew, and Acton, taking the nearest chair, broke open the letter with the Silvermead postmark, and read as follows—

"My dear Friend,

"Whatever my trials, and however disinclined I may be to put pen to paper in any way, I feel that I have no right to defer thanking you for all your trouble, and for the many words of true kindness contained in your letter. I do so from the bottom of my heart. It is very unlikely that I can ever be of use or service to you, but if you should some day want a friend, and I suppose one never knows in this strange world what may happen, you may rely upon me to the last. You will believe this, won't you?

"Why do you call me Miss Camilla? If you write again—and of course I know you will, to tell me of my dear father—mind you say Camilla *tout court*, as in the old days.

"What a good heart you have! And how feelingly, yet with what delicacy, you express your sympathy for poor little me in my trials! I will not afflict you by dwelling on them.

"I have read all you wrote again and again, although what you tell me of him is so difficult to bear—the very worst tidings indeed that could reach me. Yes, there is a thing more bitter than *losing* one's idol, and that is the discovery of its baseness.

"You will smile when I tell you something. I have heard that people in extreme mental anguish—either from unbearable grief, long solitary imprisonment, or some other dreadful cause, are subject to marvellous fancies; I think you call them hallucinations. I read in a book, too, once, that it is an expedient of nature—or rather it ought to be called a merciful decree of Providence, I should say—to create these self-delusions to prevent our dying, or, worse, going out of our minds. Well, do you know, I am in one of those states now? With everything to make me wretched I have intervals of almost exultation, and do you guess what I imagine then? No, I am sure you do not. Oh, it is so curious—like what I should think mesmerism must be. It seems even at mid-day all was darkness round me, but that I had a bright light *within*, trying to illumine the gloom and mist outside That all the real circumstances of my life were mere phantasmagoria—there is another word that I am not quite sure is right—my unhappiness, loneliness, loss of *his* heart, my contempt for him, all false and impalpable delusions, while on the other hand it appears to me most vividly, both when I am awake and also during the little sleep I get, that *his* love for me which no longer exists, and mine for him which I know must be dead, are the

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only solid realities. I am worrying you with all this nonsense, but it is a comfort to write it, and they say the miserable are always selfish.

"Besides, I could tell no one else, I have no girl friend. I think if I had—unless God had given me a sister it would not help me much; and as for dear gran'ma, I am getting so fond of her, you would never believe it, she has been so good and tender all through this trouble. When I try to tell gran'ma about it, I cry so it makes her more unhappy than I can bear to see. It is so sad to see a very old person cry. They are not so strong as we are to bear things, and it always seems as if the little time they had left should be peaceful and bright. I am crying now, but as she doesn't see it I don't mind. I feel worse sometimes when I cannot cry.

"A hundred loves to dearest papa. You must not show him this letter, he would fret so. I am so glad his affairs are in a better state. Say I would write under cover to you, but for a promise I have made.

"Your grateful friend,

"CAMILLA HARDING.

"P.S.—There is only one thing left that you can do for me. You are so good and kind, that I am sure God must love you. Pray to Him for me. Don't forget."

"Confound it," muttered Acton, as he crushed the sheet and pitched it into his open desk, "she loves the fellow still! Time, time alone can change her. I shall write again, in a few days of course, another cargo of lies—I beg my pardon, diplomatic romance, I mean—and *ad interim* I'll indulge her with a *coup de repos*. Well, there is always compensation for everything. My precious cousin is worse I hear. Let me see, how many days has he been ill? I think—yes, five to-day. They don't seem to know what kind of fever it is. Yes, it's a week to-day since he dined here. Lucky I didn't order much, he couldn't eat a crumb. Ha! some days yet before anything can be known; I mean with comfort.

"Well, appearances must be respected in this respectable world, so I'll go and enquire how my dear Jack is. Ha, ha! Little Lilla is a truer philosopher than she thinks for. Nothing real but the shams! Lord, it's lucky she don't believe in those dreams of hers though. Pray for you! Yes, my beauty, depend upon it I will, but it shall be to the powers of darkness, that's all the difference, ha, ha!

"Well, now I must compose a countenance and go round to Chapel Street."

Brudenell's tiger opens the door.

"How is Mr. Forbes?"

"Same, sir," said the boy gravely. "Would you like to step in,

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sir!" he volunteered, with the usual inevitable displacement of h's to be found in the domestic wild beast. "Master is at home, sir, he's in the drawing-room."

"Yes, I will come in for a moment."

He found Brudenell just returned from a morning ride with his betrothed.

"Ah, Acton, I'm so sorry never to have been in. You want to see your cousin?"

"Well, just as you think best. If it would be any use, or any comfort to him."

"No, poor fellow, when conscious, he is quite torpid. I believe now he is asleep, but I will ask."

"Do not trouble, pray," said Acton, sitting down. "I'll come back before long; and if he would not care to see me——"

"The doctors say the fewer the visitors the better, so if you don't insist——"

"By no means. Poor Jack, although he is my second cousin, and may possibly one day be my heir, I have only known him six or seven weeks. Allow me, as one of his few relatives, to thank you for all you are doing. There are not many men who would put up with all the annoyances of sheltering a sick guest, even in the case of a relation."

"Oh, don't name it. You are too good. Jack and I were not only fast chums at school, but we have been like brothers ever since. A dearer, better fellow——"

But all at once, and to the speaker's own intense surprise, he found himself obliged to jump up and go to the window. His emotion was too much for him.

"What cursed fools these feeling people are!" thought Cyril. Then aloud and pleasantly: "Well, well, let us talk of more cheerful subjects. I hear I may congratulate you on your marriage. Is that so?"

"Quite true, I am happy to say." Acton extended his hand which the other took rather awkwardly. He had his handkerchief still to his face, and was not quite ready to turn round.

"You will have the handsomest wife in England," said Cyril, with a shake and much show of heartiness. "I wish you joy."

"Thank you, thank you. Pray sit down again, you are in no hurry—will you stop to luncheon?"

"Not to-day, thanks, but I need not go just yet," and he resumed his seat.

"Forgive my asking," said Horace, with a peculiar smile, and also taking a chair; "but—well, if I am indiscreet stop me at once—may I not also congratulate you? Are not you, too, engaged to be married?"

The charge was so sudden, that with all Acton's practice in concealing what he felt, a deep blush suffused his cold yet handsome countenance. He burst out laughing.

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"To whom, in the name of wonder?" he asked, really mystified.

"Nay, I must not say."

"Have you heard so?"

"Not exactly."

"Then why——?"

"Oh, I had strong grounds, believe me."

"If you mean that I danced too often the other night with Lady Florinda Dashmore——"

"No, no, it wasn't her I meant."

"Then who, by all that is marvellous?"

"No, since it is not so, I would not name the lady for worlds; and if you really do not know whom I mean——"

"No, honour bright, not the wildest notion. Oh, seriously, this is not fair to a fellow. I think you ought to tell me."

"I apologise for starting the subject, and quite agree you have a right to press for her name. Will you believe me, when I tell you it is impossible, under the circumstances, that I can name her? Evidently my suspicions were wrong."

"Be it so then. Keep up the enigma. I hope at all events she is charming."

"Most captivating."

"And pretty?"

"Adorably—at least, I should say so, if not engaged to another," said the *fiancé* of Lady Susan, correcting himself.

"Oh," went on Cyril, "Lady Caulfield's daughter soars serene over all rivalry. And when is the happy event to come off?"

"Why, very soon indeed, considering, I mean, how much long engagements seem to be in fashion. We are to be married—if all goes well—towards the end of July."

Acton thought there was a strangely false ring in the assumed joyfulness, with which the man strove to speak of his nuptials. Brudenell felt much for the friend lying sick upstairs, no doubt, but that was not it. No, clearly he did not love this classic beauty he was engaged to. Ho, ho! and why? Was it then, as Camilla's letter to Horace suggested, that his heart was all hers save for the false testimony of his eyes to his dishonour? Yes, here, no doubt, was the key to the whole mystery. It was well, Acton thought, that chance had taught him how the land lay. For greater caution now became necessary, but Cyril's caution by no means excluded, as we have already seen, the most daring expedients. He rejoiced to-day exceedingly, that he had written all that imaginary talk of Horace's to the poor confiding little nymph at Silvermead, for if Horace loved her still, even unconsciously, there was always the danger of some accident occurring to vindicate Camilla in his eyes, and bring the lovers together once more, never again to part.

The bare thought of such a contingency filled Acton with rage

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and terror, and practised as he was at concealment, Horace could but notice the strange light which darted o'er his visitor's face, turning his eyes almost green for a second or two, at the end of the very brief pause, and during which all the above reflections rushed through the impostor's brain—for he was eminently a rapid thinker. Meanwhile, the host had been folding up and directing two or three previously written notes. Merely for something to say, he asked Acton, as he set the superscription to the last:

"Do you know old Sir Ewing Crofton?"

"Eh?" replied the other, not without a slight start.

"He is attending poor Forbes."

"Oh, yes, he is our family physician," but the moment the words were uttered he regretted them.

It has been said that this double-dealer was skilful in hiding his real impressions, and so he was for the most part. But men do not become Talleyrands by three-and-twenty except in books.

"Indeed!" said Horace. "Ah, that accounts for it."

"I don't quite understand."

"I mean that doctors generally go in families. I have heard Jack say Sir Ewing had always attended his people, and they very probably originally consulted him at Lord Hammersley's recommendation."

"Ah, very likely. I have never been ill myself, and do not even know him by sight."

"He has been here once to-day, but I have just asked him to call again; the nurse whom Sir Ewing sent in seems a very experienced woman, and she reports unfavourable symptoms since the last two hours."

"I am very sorry to hear that."

"I will send this at once," said Horace, ringing the bell. "It is close by, and I believe the great man is at home, so we may expect him immediately."

Acton's impulse was to jump up, and hasten off, but he repressed it. He had very good reasons of his own for not caring to meet Sir Ewing, but there must be at any rate two or three minutes to spare.

The note despatched, he leisurely rose, and pleading the appointment which he said had obliged him to decline stopping to luncheon, quietly took his leave.

"Well, I've learnt a thing or two by that move," he reflected, as he strolled down Park Lane, merely for a saunter. "The plot thickens, upon my word. However, I'm not going to worry myself with possibilities. A man can but play his cards to the best of his ability, as old Harding would say." And he proceeded to review his position in all its complex bearings by the new lights which his interview with Brudenell had shed upon it.

That meeting had set the latter thinking too. Ever since he had watched Acton's eyes when they rested upon Camilla's, and

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been jealous of him at the Hasham ball, he never till now dreamt of her having betrayed him for anyone else.

But if Acton was really not engaged to anybody, what could it all mean? Could it be that they were lovers who did not want to be married? Such things have happened, and the slimy-tongued Miss Laffinch had hinted that, but Horace scouted the idea of this being any case of the kind.

Miss Harding must at any rate have wanted Horace to marry her, or why had she encouraged and accepted him?

Was there all this time a third lover in the case, of whom he had hitherto heard nothing—only seen for that brief moment in his false one's arms?

"Except at the ball," Horace told himself, "I have somehow never detested this young Acton as a rival; on the contrary, I have so far rather liked him, and albeit, he has not a good countenance, I am fond of men who have like him a head upon their shoulders.

"He was there though that night. The chestnut hack is always proof of his presence. Still he may have been only helping a friend, but who, in the wide world, could that friend be, whom Acton, loving her himself, as I am almost sure he did, would yet throw, so to speak, into her very arms, while he stood calmly by, or at all events kept watch in the neighbourhood? Adam the clodhopper had sworn there were 'two on 'em.'

"No it is all very strange—mysterious to a degree.

"After all, what matters it to me? There was someone in her arms, and that is enough. Am I not engaged to another?" And here he pitched down a pen he had been abruptly biting, thrust his hands into his pockets and strode excitedly about the room.

Finding himself at the window he saw that the great physician's brougham and pair had drawn up to the door—he knew not how long before, his meditations had been too engrossing for him to notice its arrival. Horace had given orders that Sir Ewing Crofton should be shown at once to the sick man's room, but with a request that he would speak to Horace on his way down.

The equipage had that unmistakable air of all doctor's carriages and studs. Dingy yet respectable, hard worked yet of the best. This individual M.D. kept three such turns-out, and all had the same much used look. It is only when medical men handle the reins themselves that their vehicular appointments ever assume anything of the really luxurious or fashionable. The poet tells us that:

"Things are not what they seem,"

but a man's profession has a marvellous talent for not being repressed either in himself or his belongings. To take only one instance, how very rare is it to see an author whose hair is short and neat, and whose severe yet faultless attire and bearing might get him mistaken for say, an idle Guardsman; and this often in

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sheer despite of considerable determination, and pretty constant effort on such author's part to screen what he is not!

Sir Ewing Crofton, Bart., M.D., has no wish to disguise his calling. He is far too justly proud of being what he is. Without knocking at the door—Sir Ewing has great respect for even two seconds of time—he now joins Brudenell, who says:

"How good of you to come; will——"

"I am glad I was sent for, a change of treatment was required."

"He is worse then?"

"N—no, but there are complications; as I have told you the case is serious, not desperate. I have only time now to say that if Mr. Forbes has any relations they ought to be sent for."

"His parents have long being dead, and strange to say the only relative I know of has but just left this room—Cyril Acton, Lord Hammersley's son."

"Ha! he would be a cousin. Yes. The Hammersleys were formerly friends and patients of mine."

"So he was saying."

"Yes, yes, sad history! of course you know. Ay, ay, Cyril, so it was."

"All before my time, Sir Ewing, I know nothing.

"Ah, indeed, Oh, most painful. However, we'll talk of that when I have more leisure. Just tell me, is he quite an object?"

"An object?"

"Well, a cripple is always more or less——"

"A cripple—"

"Do you mean to tell me that this young man is not a——"

"My dear Sir Ewing, there is some mistake; Cyril Acton is remarkably handsome, taller than either of us, and as straight as a die!"

"But I tell you Cyril was born a hopeless cripple, and must ever have remained so. I feared also that he would turn out an idiot."

"Well, my friend Acton is not that at any rate!"

And Horace could not restrain a laugh at the incongruity of the idea.

"At any rate I can't keep people dying without me while we discuss the point," said the doctor, also laughing. "I've got all the facts down in my note-books, and shall certainly look them up. But now good-bye."

And so saying he ran nimbly down to his brougham, despite his sixty-five winters; and the quiet lean pair of horses rattled him off at a pace only limited by regard for the safety of others and police regulations against furious driving.

(*To be continued.*)

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THE THREE SUITORS.

A LEGEND OF RHEINECK.

A FEAST was held in Rheineck's halls,
And banners waved o'er its ancient walls,
And knights and damsels in pomp and state
Rode gaily under the castle gate;
And minstrels played,
And chargers neighed,
And pages, in silken vests arrayed,
Announced the company as they came,
Lordly baron and beauteous dame;
From Cöln, and Mainz and Hattenheim;
From Bonn, Coblenz and Rüdesheim,
From Draiserhof and Ehrenfels,
From Nonnenhof and Drachenfels,
From Lahneck, Braubach, Dreyeckshausen,
From Bingen, Lorch and Assmannshausen,
From Godesberg and Heisterbach,
From Johannisberg and Andernach,
Came young and old (for he asked them all)
To Conrad von Rheineck's banquet hall.

The wars were over,
And each bold rover
Had nothing to do but to live in clover;
So Rheineck's lord
Laid by his sword,
And, anxious to try how his cellars were stored,
Being thirsty with marching, and charging, and storming,
Sent out his invites for a grand house-warming.

The tables groaned 'neath the ample cheer,
Too ample by half to be quoted here;
Tho' a French cook would stare
At the "too solid" fare
Which the *chefs* of the old time were wont to prepare,
And which now one ne'er sees, except *chez* the Lord Mayor.
Then the wine, which most folks thought the cream of the feast,
In huge extra-sized flasks holding four quarts, at least;

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Not the sour, washy stuff travestied into wine,
And sold in the steamers that ply "up the Rhine,"
As what Brother Jonathan calls genu*ine*.
But sound, strong, and sparkling; *so* wholesome withal,
That a man safely might
Drink his gallon at night,
Yet next day, when he woke, feel no headache at all;
Tho' its patrons were legion, not one ever showed a
Particular liking for seltzer or soda;
Nay, Conrad himself, who, for fashion's sake drank hard,
Took nothing next morn save a toast and a tankard.

Hot from the castle kitchen came
Meats and pasties, fowl and game,
Giant joints on giant dishes,
Monster pies and mighty fishes,
Eel and salmon, carp and sole,
Lambs and porkers roasted whole.
Sauerkraut, whose odour rose
Grateful to each Teuton nose,
All substantial, solid cheer,
Flanked by jugs of Munich beer.

'Twas a pleasant sight for Rheineck's lord
To see his board
So handsomely stored
With dainties few nobles could then afford:
And he might be forgiven, perhaps, for feeling
A glow of pride o'er his senses stealing,
For tho' no word
From his lip was heard,
Yet, if looks can speak, it might well be inferred
That he meant by his gay and self-satisfied smile,
"I flatter myself I *have* done it in style!"

And so thought his guests, or at least *seemed* to think,
For they never ceased eating, unless t'were to drink;
First hacking the boiled meat, then maiming the roast,
As if wagering who could eat fastest and most;
Or if some few *did* pause, it was only to try
If they couldn't attract Lady Kunegunde's eye
(And these, *entre nous*, were mere boys, by-the-bye),
For in *her* presence none, not the loveliest dame,
Any homage could claim,
And one cannot well blame
The young men for their taste, tho' she *had* such a name;
She was pretty enough to win hearts by the score,

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But tho' one and all swore
They desired no more
Than herself, yet it wasn't that made them adore,
Aye, and flatter her more than folks do a new May'ress;
What then? Why, forsooth,
If we *must* tell the truth,
She was Conrad von Rheineck's sole daughter and heiress.

Yes, whene'er the spoiler Death
Should stop her gallant father's breath,
Whene'er the old ancestral tomb
Should for his honour'd bones find room,
Then would the castle's moss-grown walls,
Its turrets grey, its banquet halls,
The vineyards sloping to the Rhine,
The fertile meads, the lowing kine,
Mountain and valley, stick and stone,
All be hers, and hers alone!
This it was that added grace
E'en to her bewitching face,
This it was that, when she smiled,
Fancy, sense, and heart beguiled;
Love may fail his prey to hold
If he forge no chain of gold,
But where love and gold enchain,
Who can e'er be free again!
In her soft eye's twinkling light
Priceless diamonds glittered bright.
And in each delicious dimple
Lurked the magic charm "fee simple."
But tho' her glance was soft, 'twas keen,
And they were mistaken who thought her "green;"
She knew how to value their cringing and bowing,
Their sighing and ogling, protesting and vowing;
She saw through their art, cloth'd in words sweet as honey,
And wished they might get either her or her money;
Nay more, to prevent all mistakes on their part,
At the same time to give ev'ry beau a fair start,
Her conditions once fixed, she determined to state 'em,
And therefore declared as her *ultimatum*,
She never would,
And she never could,
And moreover, she felt sure she never should
Marry Prince or Baron, or Count or Knight,
Unless he consented her love to requite
By dislodging a troublesome family sprite
Which of late (said report) in the still midnight hour
Had chosen to haunt a particular tower;

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If this he effected
(Which she scarce expected)
All she could say was—he should not be rejected;
But—if he should fail,
And to meet the ghost quail—
Why then, he should pay down at once, on the nail,
A thousand gold crowns, as a sort of black mail;
And that this to all parties concerned might be clear,
'Twas drawn out by a clerk, with a pen at his ear,
Duly witnessed by Conrad one bright summer noonday,
And signed at the bottom in full—Kunegunde.

Conditions like these
Any passion might freeze,
So no wonder her lovers fell off by degrees;
For, tho' Germans like ghosts in a novel or play,
Yet to stand face to face, and by night—not by day—
With a family goblin, was too much, thought they.
But there still remained three, when the others fought shy,
Each resolved to "go in
And (if possible) win"
Lady Kunegunde's hand, or at all events try:
First, a Baron, who dwelt in a *château* hard by,
Then a Count from Vienna
Less wise than most men are,
Whose nose was as red as the dye they call "henna,"
With which Turkish dames, at least nine out of ten, are
Adorned, by just tinging their fair finger tips,
Till they rival in colour their sweet cherry lips;
The third was a Knight, poor as any church mouse,
Without castle or cash, but with plenty of *νους*:
These decided by lot
Who should be, and who not
First to go and encounter—they couldn't tell what;
And it fell to the Baron, who looked rather blue,
Why, he only knew,
When the highest he threw;
And he looked bluer still, and more nervous he grew
As the evening drew near
Which (coincidence queer!)
Was the very same evening when gay folks came swarming
"T' assist (as the French say) at Conrad's house-warming."

The feast was o'er, the revel done,
The guests retired one by one,
With weary eye and wine-flushed cheek
Their pillow's soft repose to seek:

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Still one in lonely watching sat,
One shiv'ring heart beat pit-a-pat,
Alone in Rheineck's haunted tower,
While solemn tolled the midnight hour.
Eleven, *Twelve*—with boding clang
The last stroke through the turret rang
The Baron quailed the sound to hear,
His wiry locks grew stiff with fear;
Still there he sat, nor stirred a limb,
He gasped for breath, his eyes were dim,
His useless sword beside him lay,
A maiden blade in scabbard gay;
When, if he dared believe his sight,
A phantom, clad in spectral white,
Passed noiseless thro' the turret door;
His senses fled, he saw no more!

The morning sun on the castle shone,
But before day broke, the Baron was gone,
Yet, though they tried in vain to find him,
They found the crowns which he'd left behind him,
In ten small bags of a hundred a piece,
Each number'd like cabs, or the London police.
Lady Kunegunde smiled as she took the gold,
And the Count from Vienna (if truth be told)
Looked uncommonly vext
For *his* turn came next,
And he longed to get off it, but had no pretext;
While the penniless knight, who had nothing to lose,
Thought, "What wouldn't *I* give now, to stand in his shoes!"

And very shaky shoes they were,
To climb that fatal turret stair,
And at each step they shook the more
That brought them near the turret door.
His lantern shed a flick'ring ray
To guide him on his dreary way;
But yet, his progress was so slow,
He stopped, and shook, and shiver'd so,
That, ere he'd fairly reached the tower,
The bell chimed forth the midnight hour.

But what he saw, or what he heard,
His lips ne'er breathed a single word,
Enough to say
That he sped away,
And was twenty miles off before dawn of day,
In his hurry forgetting the forfeit to pay;

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While the penniless Ritter, whose name was Sir Franz,
Began to imagine that *he* had a chance;

For in good sooth, thought he, the goblin must be
Something out of the common to frighten all three!
And, as evening drew near,
He felt hope banish fear,
For unless he mistook he had seen pretty clear
Lady Kunegunde's eye
Once or twice glancing sly,
Aye, and lovingly at him, when no one was by;
And besides, on reflection,
He'd some recollection,
That often before (tho' with due circumspection)
She *had* smiled *so* sweetly, and with *such* a meaning,
That he, who love matters was shockingly green in,
Unlike the gay lisper who courted Miss Julia,
Couldn't help thinking 'twas "werry pekooliar."

At length night came, and with it the hour
When he must enter the dreaded tower;
As the most potent charm
To defend him from harm,
He carried his naked sword under his arm,
Aye, and stamped as he walked up the turret stair,
And frowned with that sort of *insouciant* air
Which some people are apt to call "devil may care."
And he opened the door, and sat down in a chair,
And surveyed the old walls, and the rafters all bare,
And then paused to take breath after climbing four pair!

That knell, 'tis the clock,
And that sound, tis a knock,
A most goblin-like din,
And the knight cries, "Come in!"
And it *does* come in, a figure in white,
About five feet five inches in height,
And it points to the door with its left forefinger,
A hint to Sir Franz that he'd better not linger.
The knight draws back as the ghost approaches,
As fast as one yields, the other encroaches,
Round, and round, and round the table,
Dodging as fast as their feet are able,
They get by degrees very near the door.
Where the knight had laid his sword on the floor;
And he snatches it up, all ready to strike,
And he says, "Come on now, as soon as you like!"

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But Sir Franz plain enough without spectacles can see
The ghost doesn't seem any fighting to fancy.

But suddenly, ere
Of the trick he's aware,
Throws the turret door open, and makes for the stair
Yet, there's many a slip
'Twixt the cup and the lip,
Folks who *will* wear long clothes can't complain if they trip;
So down goes the ghost, with a quick easy slide,
Like a Chamounix guide,
When he wishes to glide
Without hurting himself down a steep mountain side;
And as fast as he dare go, the knight follows after,
When hark! he can hear
Ringing full on his ear,
A few paces beneath him, a strange burst of laughter;
He turns round the corner as sharp as he can turn,
O'ertakes the grim goblin, and holds up his lantern
(Whose dim feeble light makes him hope 'twill be soon day)
And sees—not a ghost, but—his own Kunegunde!

CHARLES HERVEY.

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"WHAT'S IN A NAME;" OR, THE MARSHTON SCANDAL.

A STORY IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

"I THINK the time has now come, Martha, for me to make my will," said Miss Mary Sampson, with a slight look of inspiration, as she turned her eyes upwards towards the ceiling of the sitting-room and accompanied the action with a faint sigh. "I don't know what *you* may think about making *yours*, sister, but there is not so much difference in age between us after all, and if you will allow me to express my private opinion, I should say that the time had also come for *you* to make *your* will."

"And why should *you* make *your* will, at this particular time, pray?" asked Martha, following her sister's emphasis. "And why, if *you* make *yours*, should you expect *me* to make *mine*? I hope, Mary, you are not going crazy."

"Nobody knows what may happen—'In the midst of life we are in death,'" Mary returned, with a sigh and a renewed look of inspiration at the whitewash. "That terrible sermon of Palmer's last Sunday has frightened me dreadfully, and I shall never feel at rest again until all my worldly affairs are set in order and I am prepared to leave this vale of tears for my mansion in the skies with a clear conscience that all is settled."

"One would really think you were a gushing young thing of eighteen instead of a mature spinster of five and fifty," scornfully replied Martha. "Only fancy your being frightened in that way by what that silly Mr. Palmer chooses to say. How does he know what will happen any more than you or I do?"

"He never said he did," Mary observed, parenthetically, as Martha went on remorselessly.

"You are just as likely to be married as to die, that is my opinion! I never heard such nonsense in my life."

"Martha! I will not have you talk in that light and flippant way. It is not respectful either to me or to Mr. Palmer."

"My dear Mary, nonsense! You must have lived long enough in the world to have heard sermons enough to frighten you out of your wits, if you were disposed to believe them, long and long since. It really is too silly, and at five and fifty too."

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"That is the second time you have seen fit to allude to my age, and very unnecessarily. I don't consider that age has anything to do with it. You are three and fifty yourself, and, as Mr. Palmer beautifully told us, 'we may be called hence in the twinkling of an eye, and be no more seen, and it behoves us to set our house in order.' Whatever you may say, I intend making my will, that is the long and short of it; only after the very ill-chosen remarks you have made about Mr. Palmer and about me, sister Martha, I am doubtful whether I shall leave all my property to *you*, as I intended doing. I think, very possibly, I may not."

"Thou canst do as thou wilt with thine own, I suppose," as dear Mr. Palmer would say. "Don't let me exercise any undue influence in your conduct, but I must say I did *not* expect this from you. I presume the Church militant will have its commissariat handsomely provided for?"

"I shall certainly act as I think best, without troubling *you* in the matter," Mary said, drawing herself up, her cap quivering with emotion; "I have always endeavoured to do what is right, and I trust that, with help, I shall not depart from the straight path."

The look of inspiration was here again directed to the ceiling.

"I should say, that, with help, you are not likely to go very far from the path which *some* may consider straight, Mary."

"Perhaps we had better say no more on the subject," Mary remarked, with gentle dignity. "Quite enough has already been said, if not too much, and we will, if you please, drop the subject."

"Let us go out for a walk, sister Mary," Martha suggested. "We are both rather warm; the fresh air will cool us."

"I am as cool as possible," said Mary, inclined at a moment's notice to renew hostilities. "But if you wish it, I will go with you, and perhaps we might just look in upon Mr. Palmer."

"I don't want to look in upon Mr. Palmer," Martha replied, snappishly; adding, "but, of course, if *you* wish it, I will go to keep you in countenance. I do not wish you to call upon him; people will talk, and in this little place no one is safe."

"My dear! surely a lady may call on the clergyman of the village, even though he be a bachelor. But I shall be glad of your company, Martha, for I much wish to have an interview with Mr. Palmer about my affairs, and I think, perhaps, he can take tea with us this evening."

"I was sure of it—there now!" gasped Martha; "you will ask him to tea as usual. Whenever any old woman wants coals or blankets, then and there the reverend gentleman comes to tea—and hot muffins. No, Mary, not that I grudge him the tea or the muffins, but why can't you tell him what you want at the Vicarage, and not have him bothering here to tea? He's always here, buzzing about the house like a tame bluebottle, and giving rise to no end of scandal."

"Your language, Martha, is—is most undignified; 'bothering

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about like a buzzing bluebottle,' I am shocked, inexpressibly shocked, and as to the scandal—absurd. Why, first it is *you*, then I, who are to be Mrs. Palmer. So long as it is both of us, he can't commit bigamy, and we are safe. He's not a Mormon."

"He may be for ought I know, or care. I object to be connected in any way with the man. I can't bear him."

Martha snorted out the words defiantly, but in vain. Miss Sampson obstinately clung to her intention of asking the clergyman into tea, and Martha followed her upstairs without another word.

The house in which they both lived, and the greater part of the income which kept it up, belonged to the elder sister, and Martha was, to a great extent, dependent upon her. They had lived together for many years and were devoted friends; but, naturally, from being limited in their society to the clergyman of Marshton, and a few, a very few neighbours of their own sphere, they sometimes had slight misunderstandings which seemed to break the monotony of their lives.

The Rev. Theophilus Palmer, the rector of Marshton, was, as has been said, a bachelor and about forty-five years of age. He had been appointed to the living about two years before the conversation above detailed.

The sisters started on their walk, passing out of the old-fashioned hall-door, garnished with a resplendent brass knocker, and down the paved straight walk, which led thence to a handsome iron-work gate set in a redbrick wall. Going through this, they closed it with a slight bang, and emerged into what was called the High Street of the village.

The almshouses and a few small shops and labourers' cottages constituted this street. The sisters walked on, nodding and exchanging friendly words with the women standing in the various doorways—and so on, to the Rectory. Mr. Palmer was not at home, the servant said; therefore Miss Mary wrote on her card the invitation to take tea with them that evening.

"He is sure to come," said Martha, as they turned away from the door.

"I hope so, Martha. I wish you appreciated Mr. Palmer as he deserves."

"So I do, quite as much as he deserves, perhaps more; now, where shall we go?"

"We have not called on Mrs. Wilkinson for some time; suppose we go there."

"As you like, Mary. At any rate you will be gratified by meeting Mr. Palmer."

"What do you mean?" quickly enquired Mary. "How can you know where Mr. Palmer will be?"

"I suppose I have eyes. If *you* choose to be blind, it is no reason why I should be. We shall find Mr. Palmer at Mrs. Wilkinson's, so I hear."

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"I must say, if your eyes are open, your ears follow suit. I hate gossip."

"It is disagreeable, particularly when you are interested in the parties under discussion."

Mrs. Wilkinson was at home; when the sisters were ushered into a pretty drawing-room Martha turned to Mary with a look of triumph.

Mrs. Wilkinson rose gracefully to greet them.

"I am so glad we are fortunate enough to find you at home this afternoon," said Mary. "I hope you are well. How do you do, Mr. Palmer?"

"This is quite an unexpected pleasure, Mr. Palmer," Martha remarked.

"Quite," interrupted Mary. "We have just been to the Vicarage, and were reduced to leave a message on a card."

"Perhaps I can give the answer *now*," Mr. Palmer replied, grasping Miss Sampson's hand warmly.

"It was to ask you to take tea with us this evening, if you are not otherwise engaged," said Mary, with a slight turn towards Mrs. Wilkinson, who was talking to Martha. "I wish to speak to you upon rather an important matter;" she added, hesitatingly, blushing a little, "and I *do* hope you will come."

"I will come, of course. I will come, and with a great deal of pleasure," Mr. Palmer smiled, and gallantly added: "One's engagements are not so numerous that there is fear of a collision."

"I am not so sure of that," Mary said, archly. "Is six o'clock too early for you?"

"Perfection," sighed the Rector, with a meaning glance, which made Miss Sampson's heart beat.

"I have just been saying to your sister, Miss Sampson, that one's geography gets very rusty after a time, and that when you came in, Mr. Palmer and I were going over the atlas together, and trying to imagine which town in America would be the pleasantest to settle in."

"Surely, you don't think of leaving Marshton?" Martha enquired of Mrs. Wilkinson, while Mary looked scrutinizingly at Mr. Palmer.

Mrs. Wilkinson flushed slightly, but recovered herself and replied: "Oh, dear no, it was idle talk, nothing more." She looked at the Rector.

"Have you heard of the projected railway?" he remarked, and the conversation was turned, and shortly afterwards the sisters prepared to leave.

"Six o'clock, don't forget," said Mary to Mr. Palmer; who replied, "Trust me."

"Hum, hum!" Martha significantly remarked when they were fairly outside. "Hum, hum."

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"Well, what does hum, hum, hum mean? You were right about Mr. Palmer being there, if you mean *that*."

"I suppose the dear Pastor finds he will not have money enough to pay all her debts, and so the happy pair are going to America."

"Nonsense, but I must say I do not like *that* woman. I don't think her correct."

"What the Church sanctions we should not find fault with, surely. Beyond being in debt, and being a widow, and not an old one, there's no harm in her."

"No insinuations, sister Martha," Mary said crossly; and in silence the sisters returned home.

At a quarter of an hour before the time, Miss Sampson, in her Sunday cap and best gown, appeared in the drawing-room. Martha took no pains to adorn herself, and was already at work when her sister entered.

"You look most captivating, sister Mary," looking admiringly at her sister's head-dress; "and I hope you have ordered something nice, besides muffins, for tea."

"Of course, dear. Mr. Palmer always does so enjoy his tea *here*."

"Poor Mrs. Wilkinson, I feel quite sorry for her," Martha replied, as Mr. Palmer's knock was heard at the door. Two minutes afterwards he was in the room with the sisters. Mary was in the best of spirits, and the tea passed off with great conviviality. Miss Sampson then led the Rector into her study, and Martha was left alone in the drawing-room. For more than an hour they were closeted in Miss Mary's den, and when they returned both were looking radiantly happy. Miss Martha's grim aspect, however, soon caused the Rector to take his leave.

"I have explained my affairs to dear Mr. Palmer, and told him exactly how I am situated, and nothing can equal his interest and delicacy. He is quite a man of business, and appears to understand all about the funds and property generally, and listened with the greatest patience to all I had to say."

"You astonish me, sister Mary—to think of a minister of the Gospel taking an interest in the loaves and fishes. Of course he didn't suggest any broken victuals being dropped into the Churches' cup?"

"Never mind what *he* suggested, or what I suggested; you will know all in good time."

"Your cap has been most successful, sister, *most* successful," Martha retorted, with a somewhat hysterical chuckle. "And so it's all settled, and I am to have notice to quit. Poor Mrs. Wilkinson! we shall be fellow outcasts soon."

"Martha, I will not stay in the room to listen to your ravings."

"Only ten years difference—a mere bagatelle," pursued Martha, as if thinking aloud. "Ten years, and on the wrong side, too."

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"Bring the candles, Patty," Miss Sampson, called to her maid and majestically sailed off.

"Good-night to you sister, Mary," Martha said, blowing her a kiss with her fingers; "I hope you will have pleasant dreams."

PART II.

"AND you really will be mine, my very own; you will really be Mrs. Marmaduke Cox?" rapturously said the attorney of King's Marshton, as he gently, and with some difficulty, wound his arm round the somewhat portly waist of his fair enchanter, Mrs. Lavinia Perkins. "Oh! say 'I will' once more, that I may know I have not deceived myself."

"I *will*, I *will*, I *will!*" replied Mrs. Perkins, with more emphasis than the little man altogether expected. "And now, I think we've had enough of billing and cooing for the present; there are several things that must be no secrets between us and which it is right you should know."

"I know them, I know them well, dearest Lavinia," said the enthusiastic attorney. "You were left a penniless widow and nobly earned your bread by teaching; came to live here in this town a year since, and have charmed away the hearts of all who have the privilege of knowing you. There, that is the history of a noble life, and one that I feel proud to think is about to be linked with my own for ever, for ever, my Lavinia!"

"Sit on the sofa, but a little further away from me, Marmaduke, and let me tell you what you do not know. You are partly right and partly wrong; you know my life in part, but there is more to tell you, and when you know what it really is you may not wish to marry me."

"Whatever it be, matters not to me; you will ever be the woman on whom the love of a man, who has reached—ahem—years of discretion, has centred. Ever be the same to me," Mr. Cox rapturously replied, edging himself somewhat nearer to the charming Mrs. Perkins.

"But if I am not a widow?" Mrs. Perkins said.

"*Not* a widow? Then I suppose you never were married, and have called yourself a widow from prudential motives."

"But I *have* been married, Marmaduke. I was married, and to a man who deceived me—basely deceived me—a wretch—a villain. I left him, Marmaduke, fled from him fifteen years ago, when I was three and twenty; I changed my name to my maiden name; I scraped together pound after pound, as a governess, and won at last my independence, by my own exertions, and with my little savings I bought this house, and live here cheaply and happily."

"And is this all, Lavinia?" soothingly said Mr. Cox, as her head drooped gradually lower and lower, till it found a resting-place on

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his shoulder. "Tell me, sweetest, is he still alive? Have you ever heard from him since he deserted you?"

"Since I deserted him, dear? No, never, never; my aim was to forget him."

"What was the fellow's name, my Lavinia? I must make enquiries. Good Heavens, if I should have the cup of happiness dashed from my lips now, when the sweet draught is before me."

She allowed him a slight refreshment from the cup, as she replied: "His name; why, he changed it no less than three times during the three years we lived together. We were constantly obliged to change our lodgings in London, and we scarcely ever remained more than two months in the same place. Oh! those wretched days, I shudder when I remember them."

"Rely upon me, my own; all will yet be well. Under what name did he marry you?"

"Johnson was what he called himself, but I believe that was not his real name."

"The wretch! the scoundrel!" ejaculated the fiery attorney. "I only hope we may hear that he is dead and buried."

Mr. Cox was the chief attorney at King's Marshton, and was a shrewd, clever man of business. Half the county employed him, so he was naturally in flourishing circumstances.

Miss Sampson was one of his clients, as Marshton was five miles from the town, and consequently wrote to ask him to appoint an evening to go to her house to arrange the preliminaries for carrying out some legal matters she was interested in.

About three weeks after we parted with Miss Sampson, the attorney drove over and was ushered into the sitting-room, at tea time. He took tea with them and was invited into the library afterwards by Miss Sampson; Miss Martha being once more left to her knitting and her meditations in the drawing-room.

"Quite a relief to have an evening without that meddlesome parson being here, inducing poor Mary to make a goose of herself," she thought. "Really age is no protection to one against the sort of thing. To think of Mary at her time of life going on like a giddy young thing, and with such a man as the Rector, too! What a brother-in-law! And this is about the marriage settlements I suppose. I hope Mr. Cox will tie up all the money tightly, that's all he wants; loaves and fishes again."

Mr. Cox was a long time in the library with Miss Sampson, but at last he entered the room alone.

"I must congratulate you on your prospects, Miss Sampson," said he to Martha; "I do so most heartily."

"I am much obliged to you, but I really do not know to what you are alluding. I am not aware that my prospects are particularly bright."

"Indeed. I beg your pardon," apologetically, said the attorney.

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"I hoped the intended marriage of your sister with the Rector would also add to your happiness."

"Then it *is* to be, is it?" Martha rose from her chair. "Mary *is* going to make a fool of herself, after all. She has told me nothing of this, Mr. Cox, absolutely nothing. Do you know the Rector—the happy man?"

"No, madame. I have not the pleasure. I never saw him."

"Then, Mr. Cox, I congratulate *you*. But excuse me, I am upset by this news, and I assure you, Mr. Palmer irritates me beyond endurance."

Miss Sampson entering the room, the conversation was changed. Mr. Cox prepared to go, and it was arranged that the necessary deed should be ready in about ten days. He then took his leave of the sisters.

"I am not going to make my will after all, sister Martha," began Mary, with a bashful and ingenuous air. "It is *not* a will that Mr. Cox has to prepare."

"Then it is something to enable Mr. Palmer to make away with your money, I suppose, Mary? I am sure he proposed to you a week ago and that you accepted him, and that you are to be married very soon."

"You are right for *once*, sister Martha; he *did* propose and I *did* accept him, just a week since, and Mr. Cox is preparing a marriage settlement. I should have confided this to you earlier, but your dislike to Mr. Palmer has been so plainly expressed I hesitated and delayed. I hope I have your good wishes, Martha."

"As the want of them will not prevent the marriage taking place, you have them, Mary." Martha broke down and sobbed bitterly.

"There is no reason why we should be separated, Martha, no reason whatever. I have made Theophilus quite understand that you will live with us."

"Pray don't ask me, Mary; I could not do it. I am sorry, but I cannot endure Mr. Palmer; and living in the same house with him is out of the question."

"I am sorry you have not yet learned to appreciate him, and his piety and blameless life, but some day I do hope you will be converted."

Martha kissed her sister, and, muttering "Never," left the room.

Mr. Palmer being a daily visitor set all the tongues in Marshton going, and first one Miss Sampson and then the other was fixed upon as the bride-elect.

The deed was ready at last, and Mr. Cox announced his intention of driving over, if convenient to Miss Sampson, on the Wednesday, at five o'clock.

"I am going to Marshton upon business this afternoon, Lavinia," he said to Mrs. Perkins. "Let me drive you over, and if

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you do not mind a ramble through the pretty village and the fine old church, by yourself, while I am settling my business, it will give *me* great pleasure and do you good, and bring back the roses to these pale cheeks."

They had a chat on the way about the search after the missing husband and how every clue had failed.

"I only hope he's dead," said Cox.

They drove up to Miss Sampson's door and Mr. Cox, giving the reins into her hands, was ushered into the library, where Miss Sampson was waiting, and evidently in a flutter.

"I am expecting Mr. Palmer every moment," she said, "as I thought it better to consult him in your presence about the deed. I hope he will be here soon."

At that moment he entered the room, having on his way cast a look of anxious enquiry at Mrs. Perkins sitting in the dogcart at the gate.

She, prudent woman, had a thick veil on, thinking it unnecessary for the King's Marshtonians to be aware of her drive with Mr. Cox.

Miss Martha Sampson was, as usual, sitting in solitary grandeur in the drawing-room, when she was roused from her reverie by the maid.

"Please, Miss Martha, there's a lady wishing to speak to Miss Sampson, but as missis is engaged, I have brought her to you."

Mrs. Perkins entered, and bowed to Martha.

"Excuse my agitation," she said, almost gasping for breath, "but I have just seen a person in whom it is impossible I can be mistaken. Will you kindly tell me who the gentleman is who has just entered the house?"

"Probably our Rector, Mr. Palmer; I know he was expected about this time. Can I be of any service to you?" Martha was agitated in her turn.

"Yes, yes, indeed you can; but I do not know how to act for the best; pray send for Mr. Cox and let me speak to him."

Miss Martha was about to ring the bell when Patty appeared at the door.

"Mrs. Wilkinson, please, Miss!"

That lady walked hurriedly into the room and with a trembling voice said, as she took Martha's hand:

"Miss Sampson, forgive my coming, but will you allow me to ask you one question, and will you give me a candid answer? This lady will pardon me I am sure." She turned and bowed slightly to Mrs. Perkins.

"For Heaven's sake, Miss Sampson," she continued in a low tone, "tell me if it be true that your sister is engaged to be married to Mr. Palmer. I have heard rumours about it, but I know how people's tongues run on, and I ask *you* to tell me the truth."

"There can be no secret about it *now*, Mrs. Wilkinson. I may

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say openly that *he is* engaged, and is at this moment talking to my sister and the solicitor about the marriage settlement."

"Oh! the monster," Mrs. Wilkinson exclaimed.

"I cannot wait, Miss Sampson," she continued; "my honour, your sister's honour, your honour, Miss Sampson, depend on my at once seeing Mr. Palmer. Where is he? Take me to him."

Mrs. Perkins was becoming very fidgety, and suddenly turning to Mrs. Wilkinson, she said: "I do not know who you are, Madame, but my business with Mr. Palmer is quite as important, or more so, than yours can possibly be. My object is to defeat that man's designs, and to expose him, even if I lose myself."

Regardless of Mrs. Perkins, Mrs. Wilkinson opened the door, and hurriedly begged Miss Sampson to show her where the room was in which the consultation was being held. Mrs. Wilkinson, much agitated, burst in upon the trio, who were sitting at the table, looking over the deed.

"Miss Sampson, I ask no pardon for my intrusion. I come to warn you against that man, who calls himself Palmer. His name is not Palmer, and he is my husband."

"*Your* husband!" shrieked Mrs. Perkins. "He is my husband."

Miss Sampson was supported by her sister. Mr. Palmer was speechless. Mr. Cox came forward at the momentary pause which occurred.

"Madame—Lavinia—we must have some order. What are the charges you make against this gentleman? We must have this made clear before anyone leaves the room."

He went to the door, locked it, and kept the key in his hand.

"Miss Sampson, you will kindly allow these ladies to speak."

He pressed Mrs. Perkins' hand as he passed her. Mr. Palmer still remained speechless. Mrs. Perkins had thrown back her veil and confronted him, as sternly as Nemesis.

Mr. Cox turned to Mrs. Wilkinson:

"Be so good as to state to Miss Sampson how you are connected with the—" he was about to say prisoner, but checked himself and said, "this gentleman?"

"Twenty years since that man, who now calls himself Palmer, but whose name is Roberts, married me; I know the church and can produce the certificate. We met accidentally about eighteen months since, when I took my house. Since I married him he has gone into the church. I had weakly forgiven him his desertion of me and we had arranged to go to America together. But now"—the poor woman burst into tears, and was unable to proceed.

Mr. Cox went up to Mrs. Perkins and begged her to tell her story.

"I was married to that man eighteen years ago, I suppose two years after he had deserted this poor lady. He married me under the name of Johnson and treated me so badly, I left him and devoutly prayed I might never see him again."

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Palmer, as white as a sheet, turned to Miss Sampson. "Mary, you believe in *me*, do you not? you believe in *me* rather than in the base and wicked lies these women have told."

Martha indignantly stepped between him and her sister: "I wonder you presume—" but Mr. Cox interrupted her.

"This gentleman dares you, ladies; do you wish for a trial for bigamy?"

"Let me entreat you to be merciful," exclaimed Miss Sampson, mustering up all her courage, and looking piteously at Mrs. Wilkinson. "For all our sakes let us hush up this scandal;" she took Mrs. Wilkinson by the hand, and turning to Mrs. Perkins, secured her hand. "Pray, let us try and arrange this miserable affair without a public trial."

All eyes were now dry, and Palmer was the object of five pairs glaring at him, with a fixed stare; he covered his face with his hands.

Mrs. Wilkinson exclaimed: "I wish never to see him more."

Mrs. Perkins repeated the same words, and Miss Sampson softly echoed them.

Mr. Cox suggested that Palmer should send in his resignation to the Bishop, that he should sign two documents giving up all claim upon either Mrs. Wilkinson or Mrs. Perkins, that he should at once leave the country, and if he ever returned, and made any claim against either Mrs. Wilkinson or Mrs. Perkins, that a suit of bigamy should be instituted.

In perfect silence the documents were drawn up and signed, and without a word the Rev. Theophilus Palmer sneaked out of the house.

What followed is soon told. The ladies embraced one another all round, and Mr. Cox had the audacity to salute Mrs. Perkins then and there, and to introduce her as his future wife. Miss Sampson generously paid Mrs. Wilkinson's debts, and took a smaller house for her, where she could live more economically on the income settled upon her, and which Mr. Palmer could not touch. Mr. and Mrs. Cox were intensely happy, and became staunch friends of the Misses Sampson, and frequent visitors at their house.

"I only regret we did not have the fellow tried for bigamy," said Mr. Cox, one evening. "If I had had my way, I would have had him put in prison, as sure as his name was Palmer."

"But it wasn't," said Mrs. Cox.

"He was very handsome," Miss Mary remarked, and sighed.

"Handsome is as handsome does, Mary," Martha severely replied. "He was a whited sepulchre."

"Peace be to his ashes," Mrs. Cox irrelevantly observed. Upon which her husband fervently ejaculated "Amen."

R. A. LEA.

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SOME BOOK FRIENDS.

I HAVE been in my way almost as omnivorous a devourer of books as the gentle Elia himself. Unlike him, indeed, I have even read Hume and Gibbon with hope of profit, if not expectation of pleasure; have interested myself in the chronicles of Flavius Josephus, "that learned Jew," and have not, at times, found even Population Essays and Statutes at Large too strong meat for my mental digestion. But those days are past, never to return, and I am constrained to confess, though I shame not in the confession, that my reading has become as entirely purposeless and desultory as reading can well be.

There is something, I think, to be urged in favour of this aimless wandering through the bye-ways of literature. To read with the deliberate desire and intention of profit is doubtless meritorious, and there is, moreover, a practical and business-like tone about it. To dig for gold and to find it is a triumph, no doubt, but, after all, it is only the reward of labour; a rich reward perhaps, but still something in the nature of a day's wage for a day's work. To minds of a certain constitution there is something infinitely more exhilarating in the accidental unearthing of a big nugget, while turning over a rubbish heap. Metaphorically I have often done this: there is no judging by appearances in the matter of literary *trouvaille*. Sometimes the dingiest and most worm-eaten of old calf covers, sometimes the gaudiest and most inartistic of publishers' bindings; sometimes, indeed, mere humble paper boards, enshrine the features of that book friend, the first glance into whose pages, like the first handclasp of the man who is destined to be one's faithful friend through life; or the first touch of the lips of the woman who thenceforth reigns queen of one's affections, stamps the day as an era in one's existence—the commencement of a new pleasure, the initiation of a life-long intimacy, a friendship that outlives all change of fortune or lapse of years, withering not by age and growing not stale by custom.

I wonder what they thought of their purchases, those original buyers of *The Germ*, that wonderful little shilling magazine, with its etchings by Holman Hunt, and its poems by the Rossettis, Thomas Woolner, and others; "My Sister's Sleep," that perfect bit of præ-Raffaelitism in verse, impressive in its realistic and studied simplicity; and the first and best instalment of "My Beautiful Lady?" Or they again, who, exactly one century ago,

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invested in the shabby little octavo, *Poetical Sketches by W. B.* Blake's earliest and sweetest lyrics, recently priced in a book-dealer's catalogue at the modest sum of sixty guineas. *O fortunati nimium sua si bona norint!* Probably most of them did not. Hunt's etchings were doubtless cut up for more than one child's scrap-book; and *My Silks and Rich Array* may have helped more than one eighteenth-century housemaid to light her morning fires.

Who indeed, to come to more modern days, would have thought that the yellow paper covers of the first English edition, price one shilling, of "*The Luck of Roaring Camp*, and other Sketches, by Bret Harte," that flooded the railway bookstalls, now some fourteen years since, enclosed a treasure so uncommon, humour so subtle, pathos so intense, prose poetry of such beauty? I have it now by me, paper cover and all, and would not sell it for many shillings. Indeed one cannot estimate by a money standard the worth of one's favourite books. Count the weary lagging hours that they have made to pass happily, the anxious thoughts that they have beguiled, the sad days and sleepless nights that their companionship has cheered; and fix, if you can, the value of their services in currency, and the profit on the original investment will show at millions per cent.

While this volume, and its kindred ones, can still be read with interest and understanding; while the smile and sigh are still involuntarily forthcoming at the touching profanity of Kentuck, uncouthly revealing the man's hidden, and hitherto unsuspected, wealth of human tenderness; while the heroism of Miggles, and the supreme self-sacrifice of the worn-out prostitute, Mother Shipton, have still power to touch the heart, faith in human nature, belief in the goodness of woman, however fallen, can never wholly die, even in the most soured and world-wearied. And for this keeping alive of one's sympathies, this preservation of the greenness of one's nature, no praise can be too high for a book, no gratitude too great for its author.

I cannot say how many birth-days ago it is since I made the acquaintance of the first of my permanent book-loves. Looking back through a long vista of years, I can see myself sitting on the floor, in very brief petticoats, following with absorbed interest the changing fortunes of the Ugly Duckling, and grieving with unintelligent sympathy over the love troubles of the Little Mermaid; sweet old stories that, like all that came from Hans Andersen's pen, still live in a perennial youth, losing nothing in charm, as the years go by, but rather gaining in intention as maturer thought supplies the moral to the simple story that was alone obvious to the childish apprehension. Andersen's *Fairy Tales* still find a place on my shelves, cheek by jowl with the lucubrations of graver writers, and, I am not ashamed to say, are dipped into as often as many others of them.

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In those far-off days, of course, I read *Robinson Crusoe* with a devotion and ardour common to all healthy-minded English boys. But alas! not long since I tried the experiment of once more reading through the erewhile cherished volumes to test the survival of the old charm. The result was failure. The world, I suppose, has spoiled me, but I found that parrots palled upon me, cats and goats delighted me no more; and Friday's untimely death could no more wring a tear from my hardened eyes than could the mysterious foot-print excite a thrill of horror in my unsympathetic breast. The once-existing spell could be no more re-invoked; and critical admiration for the masterly literary skill that could have constructed a story of such eternal popularity from material so scanty alone remains of all my Robinson Crusoe devotion.

I was but a youth of very undefined literary tastes when I bought a cheap edition of the *Essays of Elia*, not so numerous twenty years ago as they have since become. I am not about to attempt any critical estimate of Lamb's literary performances. That has been done of late, almost *ad nauseam*. Lamb is a writer whom I forget to criticise, and am content merely to love. His book was a new revelation to me. Its charm was irresistible and inexhaustible. I read the Essays at home and abroad, in bed, to the danger of the curtains. I read and re-read until some of them became indelibly impressed upon my memory. Lamb did me good, mentally and morally. The man's personality is so strikingly evidenced in his writings, and the personality is so gentle, so genial, so loveable, that one comes to regard him almost as a friend whom one has known in the flesh. One likes to know of his tastes, and is content to emulate his foibles. The evening pipe is smoked over his volume, with an added zest from the knowledge that one is sharing a friend's weakness, and one cannot refuse roast-pig, even in a city restaurant (where it is sure to be underdone and ultra-oniony), for the sweet sake of *Elia* and his *princeps obsoniorum*.

The knowledge of Lamb's sad life-history, of the unselfish devotion that sacrificed all hope of a domestic happiness, that to a man of his temperament would have been unspeakably precious, does much, no doubt (as I think such knowledge, in the case of a writer, must always do) to intensify the bond of sympathy between him and his readers. "Dream Children" is too suggestive, too unaffectedly pathetic, not to have been inspired by real feeling. The "two mournful features seen in the uttermost distance," not children at all, "nothing, less than nothing, and dreams," express with an infinite sorrowfulness the painfully-controlled yearnings of the lonely man's heart for ties and affections rendered by his own acts for ever unattainable.

Yet Charles Lamb made the best of his life. He did not suffer himself to be unhappy; his humour is ever kindly, his cheerfulness ever unstrained; his sentiment, when he is sentimental,

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ever manly; it is this, I think, makes his writings so healthy, so sound a mental tonic—he is never morbid or soured. Hazlitt, admirable as he is, becomes both at times. He is always, more or less "sick of self-love," but when he has the bad taste to transfer his affections to an even less worthy object, to prate of his passion to all who would give him a hearing, and to preserve the memory of it for ever in a *liber amoris*, his morbidity, if it do not amount to insanity, becomes disgusting.

One seems to pass from Lamb, as if by a natural transition, to the reading of the older prose writers, from whom so much of the inspiration both of his literary style and his tone of thought was drawn. There is no modern writer who seems to supply so natural a connecting link with the past. His enthusiasm, indeed, in the cause of his favourites among the giants of the older days is so contagious that it is apt to inspire the unread student with a factitious admiration that does not always stand the test of personal study. I have known a man come out very crest-fallen after an experimental hour with *Burton's Anatomy*. But no praise, however hyperbolic, can be needed to induce a liking of more than common fervour for Lamb's greatest model, Sir Thomas Browne. The folio that contains his works is a storehouse of quaint and old-world learning, gathered in very unbeaten tracks, of original speculative thought and deep philosophy, the whole expressed with a grand sonorosity of language that in itself is deeply impressive. Hallam, indeed, found his style "not flowing, his choice of words not elegant, and even approaching to barbarism." May Heaven then send us more of such barbaric grandeur. The "Hydriotaphia," if one could divest it of its meaning, forget its learning and philosophy, and regard it merely, musically, as a collocation of high-sounding words, would compare with much slip-shod composition of these later days as the majestic pealing of a mighty church organ to the reedy out-of-tune jangle of a street boy's concertina. But, for matter, the book is full of it, and to quote the words of a witty friend, rising from a perusal of Vulgar Errors, with a happy reminiscence of another Sir Thomas, famed in story; "*This* Sir Thomas is excellent, *all* his pockets are full of eels."

To Sir Thomas Browne all creation was full of beauty and of wonder. The qualities of his remarkable mind invested the lowest objects in life with a philosophic interest, not inferior to that inspired by the highest. He stood on a moral pinnacle, above the busy hum of men, watching life as an observer, apart from the throng, finding nothing in it below notice, nothing common or unclean, but impressed in all things, from the greatest to the smallest, with a profound sense of the harmony of creation. "Even that vulgar and tavern music, which makes one man merry, another mad, strikes in him a deep fit of devotion, and a profound contemplation of the first composer. There is in it a

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hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world and creatures of God—such a melody to the ear, as the whole world well understood, would afford the understanding."

The "Religio Medici," to quote Jeffrey's eloquent criticism, "is one of the most beautiful prose poems in the language; its power of diction, its subtlety and largeness of thought, its exquisite conceits and images, have no parallel out of the writers of that brilliant age, when Poetry and Prose have not yet divided their domain, and the Lyceum of Philosophy was watered by the Ilissus of the Nine."

Somebody, I forget who, has defined the *summum bonum* as sitting over the fire in winter, roasting chestnuts and reading "Tristram Shandy." One is not prepared to admit that life can afford nothing better; but certainly, among the pleasanter of its relaxations this deserves something more than mere honourable mention.

Thanks to Mr. Traill's monograph, Laurence Sterne and his morality have recently excited much revived critical ingenuity. The license that leavens the wit, humour, and pathos of his incomparable work has been explained away on various paradoxical hypotheses. It has even been advanced that it is something like a natural consequence upon the actual purity of his real life. As if the lower part of the man's nature must somewhere find vent, and the undue strain of a persistent effort to live virtuously must necessarily react in an uncontrollable impulse to write viciously. Logically, there may be something in this theory. As men have notoriously written well and lived badly, the converse to the proposition may, with some show of reason, be maintained to hold equally good. Richard Steele's authorship of the "Christian Hero" exercised no appreciable effect upon his manners or morals; and Addison's proposed exemplification of a Christian's death-bed failed in its lesson, according to Walpole's cruel sneer, from the fact of his having died of brandy.

All writing of the highest order must contain some measure of self-revelation, whether it be conscious or unconscious, designed or involuntary. Affected virtue or affected vice may for awhile be assumed; but, in the main, a man must give of what is in him. Unless his work be limited to police-court reports or special correspondents' letters, individuality will, sooner or later, find its expression. For Sterne, I am willing to believe that he was at once no better and no worse than, on the surface, his writings proclaim him to be; that he neither feigned the exquisite beauty of his more delicate sentiment, nor wrote studied lewdness with a definite unworthy object; that his nature found accurate expression in his writings, and was, in short, a mixture of contrarieties, like those of many not unworthy men whom we encounter in every-day-life—men, chivalrous and upright, respecting innocence and admiring virtue, with hearts to be moved by honourable affections and

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melted by sweet compassion, but who can smile at a *double entendre*, and hear without reprobation, and repeat without shame, stories that only pass current after the ladies have left the dining-room. I do not defend this lower, baser side of a fine nature. I would, in Sterne's case, but apologise for it as a moral deformity of not abnormal kind, or one unshared by many thousand others, besides poor Yorick.

With all his faults and imperfections upon his head, there is yet something eminently loveable about the man and his work. While men have hearts to be touched by pathos and sensibility to be affected by that truest humour that has been defined as "laughter with a sob in it," Uncle Toby and his creator have a claim upon their affections that can never be abrogated. With regard to this, his humour, Carlyle declares it to be "our finest, if not our strongest, for Yorick and Corporal Trim and Uncle Toby have yet no brotherhood, but in Don Quixote." This is like praise from Sir Hubert Stanley, "praise indeed," and deserves recording at this juncture. Thackeray is less indulgent in his estimate. Sterne is to him a great genius, yet a jester only, "who goes to work systematically, and in cold blood; paints his face, puts on his ruff and motley clothes, and lays down his carpet and tumbles on it." For once I am disposed to prefer the dictum of the sour sage.

What can one find to say that has not been said thousands of times, and with more eloquence than is now forthcoming, about Thackeray's books. One can hardly dare to venture to make selection, from his numerous volumes, of that one work that one would preserve were all the rest inevitably doomed to destruction. Not one page, one line, penned by his mighty hand, would one willingly let die. Yet if a selection were necessary, and I were condemned to solitary banishment, to some Juan Fernandez, with but one book companion to cheer my loneliness, I think that book would be *Esmond*. One has to adopt an apologetic tone sometimes in stating one's literary preferences. Our dearest book-loves, like our dearest human friends, fall sometimes far short of perfection in character or classic beauty. We are not severe upon their shortcomings; we bear lightly upon their small slips from propriety, and abstain from too close criticism of the features that always beam upon us with a warm and loving welcome. But when one's preferences and taste can be satisfied together, the triumph is complete. Perfect intellectual gratification superadded to perfect sympathetic enjoyment is so rare a combination, that books that present the double gift deserve a class to themselves, far above the common herd.

There are few works of fiction of which one can say so much. Of my own knowledge I can speak but of two—*Don Quixote* (the first part, be it understood) and *Esmond*. The rare literary ability of that monumental work impresses itself more upon one's mind as years pass by, and one notes the comparative failure of

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more recent efforts to achieve success in the same difficult line of authorship. Not that other writers have not succeeded in parodying, with an admirable ingenuity, an obsolete style, but the effort seems always more or less apparent, the shackles weigh heavily, and the result is that the story suffers; it loses its truthfulness, the characterisation becomes weak, and the men and women figure as mere puppets, or at best, walk their stage as players, clad in the ill-fitting and unaccustomed garments of a bygone friend, and act their part with stiff unreality. In *Esmond*, on the other hand, the living reality of the characters, the beauty and interest of the story, almost compel one on first perusal to lose sight of the consummate ability of the literary workmanship, which of its kind is unique, a *tour de force* in letters that has never been surpassed and rarely approached. The central figure of the novel has, it is true, been described as somewhat of a prig, and it is said that Thackeray was not himself disposed to deny the impeachment. That indeed is almost inevitable. The difficulty of creating a human character of an almost absolute moral perfection is too great to be ever achieved with a result entirely satisfactory. The experiment has been tried times out of number, but, in the issue, the efforts that have approximated success may almost be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Sir Charles Grandison is a thing of buckram, too unreal to be admitted into the argument. The character of Parson Adams, the Don Quixote of a later day, is truly beautiful, and its truthfulness is heightened by the admission of faults of temper and failure of consistency that make it the more sympathetic, as they perhaps rob it of a claim to absolute perfectibility. John Halifax is a fine lesson for the young, a noble example of what man might be but never is, but he is more priggish than Henry Esmond, and not much more real than Sir Charles. There remain then Esmond and Adam Bede, of whom one knows not which to appreciate at the higher value. Mrs. Burnett's recent *Colonel Tredennis* is an American Esmond, very noble, and, from his surroundings, in a measure original, but still (although without conscious plagiarism) distinctly suggestive of the earlier creation.

With reference to the charge of priggishness, one is indeed fain to admit that Esmond's persistent goodness is at times provoking; his rigidity is out of time with his surroundings, the "army that swore terribly in Flanders," and the loose home society of the Swift and Bolingbroke circle. One longs occasionally for some little break in the monotony of his career of self-sacrifice, some evidence of human weakness, some sacrifice of principle to expediency; one is aware, now and again, of resenting his immaculate virtue as an insult to the fallibility of human nature, of which one is eternally self-conscious; above all, one is from the first impressed with the futility of his pursuit of

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Beatrix. No mere humdrum goodness could touch such a nature as hers. If that fickle fancy were to be engaged, that shallow nature moved, *some* spice of wickedness, if not a considerable amount of it, would be an essential to the undertaking. The best of women love not over much an over-good man. They like some admixture of light and shade in the "portrait of a gentleman," and old and young alike are apt to take more interest (a timid and fearful one, perhaps) in the most graceless, ne'er-do-well than could be inspired in them by an incarnation of all that modern society deems most highly respectable. To sigh for a Lancelot has been the fate of every Guinevere, who finds scant sympathy for the vagaries of an ill-regulated temperament, in the cold perfectibility of her "blameless king."

Yet one's irritation with Esmond is only evanescent. The character cannot but engage in the main both admiration and sympathy, and in the end one lays down the book with but two regrets, that Lady Castlewood was not some ten or twenty years younger when her happiness came to her, and that he, the man, whom for long, patiently endured years of widowhood she had loved with a devotion so pure and self-sacrificing, should at last have brought her no better an offering than a heart caught in the recoil, the shreds and fragments of an affection wasted in the vain pursuit of an unworthy object.

A critic, himself a novelist of eminence, has recently fallen foul of Thackeray on the score of the failure of art displayed in the confidential attitude that he is apt to assume towards his readers, asserting, indeed, that the present more cultivated novel-reading public would not now tolerate such solecisms. In pronouncing such an opinion, I am disposed to think that the critic in question derogates unconsciously from the dignity of his own calling. "Art," to quote Cornelius Jagenal, "cannot be forced," and it is surely not obligatory upon a man of genius to cripple its expression by labouring to adapt his method or form his style in deference to the established prejudices or current tastes of the public that he finds before him. He who has a message to deliver, worth the hearing, must be permitted to render it in his own way, untrammelled by custom and superior to conventional laws, leaving his audience to hearken if they will, which, if the voice be strong enough to carry authority, sooner or later they are bound to do. Much licence is of course conceded to a Dickens or a Thackeray that in meaner men would be insufferable. The tenth-rate novelist, who interrupts the flow of his narrative to discourse flat platitudes as to his reader, whom he addresses as "Eugenio," simply excites disgust by his impertinence. Thackeray's confidences never do this; they are always, to me, worth the receiving, but, for art's sake, they are preferable certainly when met with out of the pages of his novels. In the collected volume of *Roundabout Papers* they are charming. There we meet the great man at home, divested of his robes of

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ceremony, and discoursing right pleasantly of his likes and dislikes, his personal feelings, his favourite books, his pet prejudices. One is reminded of his own triple sketch of Ludovicus, Rex, and Ludovicus Rex. There, indeed, the trappings make the man, and the poor kernel of royalty, divested of its outward insignia, shows forth a decrepid dotard. Here the padding of the "Fat Contributor" put off, the borrowed fancy dresses of Oliver Yorke and Arthur Pendennis laid aside, one is brought face to face with the genial, loveable personality of William Makepeace Thackeray himself, him of whom one who knew him well, and who, alas! has now himself passed away into the land of shadows, said, that one loved him "almost as one loves a woman, tenderly, and with thoughtfulness—thinking of him when away from him as a source of joy that cannot be analysed, but is full of comfort."

FREDERICK COOPER.

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FROM THE HAVAMAL.

(The High-Song of Odin.)

A FREE RENDERING FROM THE OLD ICELANDIC.

I LAY along the mountain brow,
And looked o'er wood, and stream, and shore,
And lightly rhymed—such fancies now,
Come to my sobered thoughts no more.

"How strange a thing," I sang, "is Love—"
For all of Love my rhymes began—
"How weak, and yet of strength to move,
And bend the stubborn heart of man.

"The loftiest in their pomp of pride,
Before it, like the humblest, fall;
Nor may the wisest dare deride,
That common craze that dupes us all;

"Nor passion in his friend despise—
Oft may we see the dullard play,
Unscathed, with smiles that fool the wise,
And fret the hero's heart away;

"Nor of his higher prudence prate—
All are alike his peers in this—
No greater ill the wise can wait
Than ignorance of life's chiefest bliss."

These were my musings as I lay—
These were the rhymes I idly wove—
What time, whilst waned the lingering day,
I waited for my coming love.

I heard her steps. The black-bird's throat
That piped below, from copsewood tree,
Breathed, as she came, a sweeter note—
Or so it seemed, fond fool! to me.

She came. The hills a glory wore,
Rosier than that the sunset brought;
All earth grew brighter than before,
Round her—or so, fond fool! I thought.

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Compared with her, my lands, my gold,
With that which wit or courage brings—
Honour among the wise or bold,
Seemed to me then as worthless things.

So seemed they then, but seem not now;
Our lives have sundered far apart,
The warbling bird on yonder bough
To-day is dearer to my heart.

"But come," she said, "when all is dark,
And veiled the prying stars above,
No eye," she said, "the kiss must mark,
No ear the whispered words of love."

I sought her father's tower by night.
She moved not to the clouded sky.
The doors were wide, the hall alight,
Up-piled the logs were blazing high.

Amid her kin, the changeful maid
Sat where the shields in order shine,
Careless of every word I said—
No glance had she to answer mine.

Again at midnight hour I came,
Silent and dark was all the tower,
One kiss, one loving word to claim
Fearless I climbed, and gained her bower.

No kiss, no vow, my toil repaid,
My bird had flown her nest. Instead,
Chained in her bower, a mastiff bayed,
Rough welcome mine! and fast I fled.

From lattice high her laugh I knew,
To see me foiled was jest and glee,
A wiser lover, I withdrew.
Enough. She was not won by me.

MARK MALLETT.

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THE HAUNTED FORGE.

AN IRISH TALE.

A LONG range of mountains divides the counties of Carlow and Wexford from each other, called respectively Mount Leinster, Black Stairs and the White Mountains; the scenery, particularly from the Carlow side, is in some places extremely beautiful, verdant fields, wooded heights and shady groves and dells being the chief features; while, at short intervals, peaceful hamlets and comfortable farms speak eloquently of an industrious and contented peasantry.

About five miles from the foot of Black Stairs is situated the thriving little market town of C——; there are several excellent shops in it, and when, on certain holidays in the year, the country people flock in, in hundreds, to buy and sell, you would hardly wish to view a livelier scene.

One day in the autumn of last year I was returning from C——, having had occasion to pay it a visit for some small matters which I required, when, about half-way towards home (my pretty cottage being a mile from the village), it commenced to rain heavily, and seeing no likelihood of its abating, I thought I might as well look out for shelter.

A little farther on stood a neat row of cottages, in the first of which, nearest to me, lived a respectable old woman who was a favourite of mine, she being extremely clean both in her house and person.

Biddy Muldowney's house was indeed a perfect picture, and put to shame many of her less active and tidy neighbours; her roof was always well thatched, her walls whitewashed, and the few windows the cabin boasted were clean and bright.

The inside of the house was in keeping with the outside. The dresser—a wooden table placed against the wall, the upper part made like an open cupboard, and filled with shining plates and mugs—was the glory of the apartment. There was a comfortable bed in one corner; one small table, one chair and a stool completed the furniture.

Biddy Muldowney herself deserves a line of description. She was a very tall woman, about sixty years of age, gaunt and angular in appearance, had good regular features, bright, black piercing eyes, black hair, well streaked with grey, and an honest

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independent manner which I had always liked. She was the district nurse-tender, and was thought very highly of in her profession; for not only was she clever, but she had also the reputation of being a "loocky woman," which in Ireland goes a great way with the simple-minded peasantry.

I had walked quickly up to Biddy's cottage and, knocking at the open door, was fortunate in finding her at home.

"Come in, ma'am, at once; you'll be drenched if you stay out a moment longer," was the greeting I received, in Biddy's rather loud but good-humoured voice.

"Come in and sit down," she said, wiping the chair with her apron as she talked; "it's wonderful weather we have intirely; shure the whole counthry 'll be ruined if a kind Providence doesn't sind us fine weather shortly."

I sat down and chatted to Biddy about the events of the day, amongst others of a dreadful murder that had been committed a few days before in the county Tipperary. A small farmer had been taken out of his bed at night, brought out of his house and cruelly murdered about twenty yards from his own door.[1]

Biddy was commenting in strong terms on this particular murder, and I remarked how very grateful we ought to feel that our lot was cast in such a peaceful neighbourhood and county.

"True for you, ma'am, so we ought to be thankful; but, oh! I remember the time when we had anything to say but that, when this county, and the counthry all round about was in a frightful state of alarm and misery, caused by thim fellows they used to call the 'White Feet.'" (At these words Biddy's voice dropped into a mysterious tone, as if she feared some of the said fellows were outside the door listening to her.) "I could tell you a story, ma'am, if you would care to listen to it, that happened to me own knowledge—aye, thirty-five years ago—that would show you what thim times were like."

I looked out, and as there was no sign of the rain ceasing, I said I should be glad to hear the story.

Biddy sat down on the small stool opposite to me, cleared her throat once or twice, and commenced in the following words:

"About thirty-five years ago there was a band of men who used to infest this part of the counthry, calling themselves 'White Feet.' They were a bad lot, one and all of them; but the head villain of the whole gang was a fellow they called 'Black Bill,' I believe on account of the tremenjous black whiskers he had, his black eyes and hair, and above all his black heart; for there wasn't a bad or cruel act you could think of but Black Bill would do, or make the poor misfortunate boys who

[1] It is a remarkable fact that Irishmen seldom murder their victims inside the dwelling, but take them out and wreak their spite or vengeance "under the blue sky."

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were with him do it for him. He was as tall as a young giant and strong as a bull, and as wicked as the *gintleman* I won't dirty me lips by naming!

"The poor farmers—aye, and for that matther, the rich ones too—had the most to fear from him. We poor crathers, that had naythur house nor field to boast of, might drag our coats where we liked, but the farmers couldn't do this; for woe to the man that crossed Black Bill's path! he might make ready for his coffin at once; and the worst of the whole thing was, he could not be taken by the peelers. The Government had offered a reward for the ruffian, but no one would tell of his hiding-places, he was so well guarded by the people he had in his sworn service. One night you would hear of a dreadful murther about twenty miles away, and magistrates and soldiers and polis would be out scouring that part of the counthry; and while they were all away, engaged looking for Bill, he would do some other dreadful deed in another district where they'd think he wouldn't be at all, at all.

"Well," said Biddy, "I was about twenty-five years of age when the story I am going to tell you happened.

"I had been married three years, and me poor mother having been nurse before me, when she died I tuk up her business. Well, there was a respectable farmer's wife, be name called Mrs. Malone, who lived over near the fut of the mountain, in a place called Mullawnagown. It was her first babby she was expecting, and she had sent me word in the morning early that it was likely she would send for me during that day, and not to go out anywhere else through the counthry.

"Well, I got me breakfast over, and tidied some little things about the place, when, about eleven o'clock, a car and beast druv up to the dure, and there was her husband ready to drive me out at wanst.

"I med no delay, and away we went in fine style. Ah, ma'am, when I thinks of the differ of the people of thim days and now, I often says to myself what's come over them at all, at all? Thim were the days when you'd see the farmers in their nate knee-breeches, grey or blue knitted stockings, long tailed coats with bright buttons; and the women with their short, tidy petticoats, their comfortable cloaks and huds, and their nate stockings and brogues, looking sinsible, dacent and respectable; while now, it's ladies they're all trying to be, with their hats and their veils and their fineries! It makes me sick, ma'am, when I see the way girls now-a-days dress themselves out. But to come back to me story:

"An hour and a half's good driving brought us to the snug farm where Mrs. Malone lived. There was a long lane leading up to the house, and there were several houses near; it wasn't a lonely place, they had plinty of neighbours, and when we arrived

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there was, as usual on such occasions, a house full of people assembled, mostly women.

"I went up to the inner room and, afther talking a little while with Mrs. Malone, came down again to the kitchen where they were preparing the dinner—and a right good dinner it was. There was lots of tay, white bread and butther, half a flitch of bacon cut down and fried on the pan, and lashens of eggs broke down on the top of that.

"Afther dinner I towld the people I would like to have the house quiet; and to tell the truth they did me bidding very quietly, and left immediately, no one remaining but the ould mother-in-law and a near neighbour.

"Well, the day went over our heads, and about nine o'clock in the night I had the comfort (with a blessing) of laying Mrs. Malone's young son in his mother's arms, and making her feel as happy as a queen.

"Of course everyone came back to drink his health, and there was great laughing and talking. It was getting on for ten o'clock, and I says to the husband, 'Turn every one of them out, like a good man, and let the poor woman go to sleep?' He did so; and I then made him go to bed upstairs, on the loft, so there was no one up in the house except ould Mrs. Malone and meself.

"Well, for the last hour I had been getting very fidgety. I had intended to stay all night—at least, till the dawn of day—but somehow I couldn't rest quiet, do me best. So at last I says to the ould woman, 'Mrs. Malone,' says I, 'I'll be going, in the name of goodness.'

"'Shure,' says she, 'it's not mad you are, to think of going home at this hour of the night?'

"'Oh,' says I, 'it's a beautiful night, you could pick up a pin off the road, and there is a pore woman next dure to me, and she doesn't know the minute or the hour; so I wouldn't like to be away, for fear anything wrong might happen.'

"'Well,' says she, 'if you must go you must. James, I'm afeard, is asleep by this, or he would go part of the way with you; but I don't think Paddy, the servant boy, is gone to bed yet, so, if you like, I will call him.'

"She did so, and in a few minutes I was ready for the road. Paddy cum with me down as far as the end of the lane, and then I bid him good-night, and set off with a light heart on me way home.

"It was early in the month of July, and one of the finest nights I had ever been out in. There was not a tree, or a gate, or a large stone that you couldn't see a mile off.

"I walked quickly—I was a good walker in thim days—and had got on a good piece of my way, when I began to think how

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silent everything was, and that maybe, afther all, I had betther have remained where I was. I now and then turned round and stood for a minute, looking all about me. There behind me were the big, gloomy-looking mountains, and there forenent me, away down in the valley, I could see the river shining, while the grand moon looked down at everything under it and seemed to say, 'Biddy Muldowney, I'm looking at ye!'

"I was beginning to wish that the night was not so bright, when, now having come to the top of the hill, I was just going down on the other side, a thick hedge being on each side of the road, when all of a suddint I thought I heard, right behind me, a futstep!

"It was only a minute before that I had looked round, and there was not a being in sight, and now to hear this step!

"I stopped and listened. The step stopped too. I went on, and immediately I heard it again; but now it seemed as if it were on the other side of the hedge; 'pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat' (so it went), and me heart began to keep time and tune with it. I knew at wanst it was no mortial's step.

"It must have been about twelve o'clock by this, and you know, ma'am, that's the hour the sperits walk. Well, I walked now so fast and was in such a frightful state of fear and perspiration (saving your presence), that I felt I couldn't go on much further without getting a wakeness.

"Just thin I remimbered I was coming up to where four roads met. There was an old, disused forge still standing at the end of the road I was on. This forge I must describe to you. It had no roof—only the four bare walls were to the good; the front door—or what was wanst the front door—was open to the winds of heaven, and so was the back of it, for that matther; at the end of the forge that was farthest from me the wall was stouter than at any other part, and there was a stone bench fixed into it. On Sundays the lads of the village used to come, and while some of them played pitch-and-toss, others would sit on this bench and look on. There was a fine ould tree just shading this seat, and it was a nice cool place to sit down upon. This was the seat I was making for as fast as me legs could carry me.

"Well, I sat down, and throwing the hood of me cloak far back off me head, I rested me back agin the wall and tried to recover me panting breath.

"From the time I sat down I hadn't heard the step, and I was taking comfort from this, when all at wanst something put it into me head to remimber that the forge was said to be haunted. It used to belong to a man be the name of Pat the Bachelor, a dacent sort of poor man, who was never married, and, be the same token, who was dead for the last five years, and the people said he used to walk round the forge ivry night.

"I was so tired, I was not able to go on without resting a bit,

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and all sorts of quare fancies kept coming into my mind. I thought of all the people dead and gone, who in days past used to come there to have their horses shod; and as I listened, I fancied I heard the 'clink, clink' of the smith's hammer.

"'Biddy,' says I, 'you may as well be moving.' No sooner said than done; and I was just fixing me cloak about me, when I heard a noise at the back of the forge which first brought me heart into me mouth, and then it nearly jumped out at the back of me ribs.

"'Oh! Biddy,' says I to meself, 'you're into it now, for a sartainty;' and there I sat waiting for what was to come, calling on all the saints in the calendar to presarve and purtect me, when I heard a voice saying in a low whisper, 'Whist, Larry, come on quick;' and thin there were a few loose stones knocked down.

"The minit I heard the voice I knew it wasn't a ghost, so I kept as quiet as a mouse, and soon heard two or three people go into the forge; so I cocked me ears to hear what they had to say.

"'Do you think, Larry, anyone saw us coming through the fields, it's such a bright night?' 'Sorra one, Bill,' says Larry. 'Did you, Jem?' 'Who would be out of their beds at this hour?' says the last fellow; 'no one; and even if they were, this is the last place they'd come to, as you know the forge has the name of being haunted.' At this they all laughed, and as I listened to them, I plucked up courage.

"'Boys,' says the first who had spoken, 'you know why I have brought you here. To-morrow night is to be the night, and I want yez to know exactly what you are to do. You, Jem, are to have the horse and car ready at the top of the back entrance; mind you see that everything is right. The rest of the boys are to come with Larry and me, and we will have no trouble in getting inside the house, as Hester O'Connor has made that part of the business aisy for us.

"'We are to go by the dark walk, slip quietly round the back of the house; mind and keep well on the grass, boys, and make for the third window facing the flower garden. The shutters will be shut; but at the hour named, half-past ten o'clock, Hester will have the window opened beforehand, so as to make no noise, and she will quietly open them. I will be the first to go in, then Larry and the other six boys will follow. The old man, she tells me, always sits reading in his library until eleven o'clock, and Alice always waits up in the dining-room, at the other side of the house, working or reading, until he has finished, to bid him good-night. When we get into the room through the window, we must turn to the right and open the door which leads into the library. We must break in suddenly on the old man, and before he knows where he is, bind him hand and foot and gag him well.

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I don't want you to do him any harm, if you can help it. I would rather not have his blood on my hands, for his daughter's sake. She, of course, hearing the noise, will run into the room, when I'll take her up in me arms and make out of the hall dure, which Hester will have open for me, lift her up on the car and make off with the darling girl to me home in the mountains.'

"'And will you marry her, Bill?' said the man they called Jem. 'That's nayther here nor there,' said the black-hearted scoundrel, who I knew by this time could be none other than Black Bill. 'It will all depind on the girl herself. If she's civil, I might, after awhile; but I'm madly in love with her, and have her I must by fair means or foul. So now, boys, you know what has to be done, and we may as well be going; but first, look out, Larry, and see if there be a sign of anyone stirring, as we can't be too careful until this job is over. Few know our favourite meeting place, and the fewer the better,' said he, with a laugh.

"With that, I threw the hud of me cloak back again over me head and face, and, the walls of the forge being as black as soot and me cloak of the same colour, I scrooged meself up agin it as well as I could. The ould tree I told you of helped to shade me, too; but, for all that, when I heard the voice of Larry within a few feet of me, I gave meself up intirely for lost.

"However, as luck had it, he did not look round at the gable end where I was sitting, but stood with his back to me (I could just see him with one corner of me eye), and looking up and down the road, he says, 'Sorra one, Bill, is out this blessed night; everyone is in their beds, where we ought to be now.'

"'Come along, then,' said Bill; and to me great joy they all went back the way they came.

"I listened for a long time, 'till they were well out of sight, and then, says I, taking a breath and talking out quite loud to meself, 'So that's what you're afther now, me boys; nothing less than Miss Alice Leslie will suit you.'

"Miss Alice, ma'am, was the minister's daughter, and the beautifulest young crater you could see in a day's walk; and what's more than that, she was betther than beautiful. If one was sick in the parish, who so ready to help as she? If one came in for a sthroke of good luck, who so happy to rejoice with them as Miss Alice? I would often go up to the Rectory if a poor woman had a bad illness, or twins, and maybe hadn't a second shoot for the unexpected babby, and the next day Miss Alice would come with little things made up in a nate bundle and a little white basket on her arm, and she would bring the roast fowl and the wine and the tay and sugar—and tay was tay thim days, and poor people couldn't buy it at all—and she used to look so lovely with her light brown hair all down her back in ringlets,

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and ivry hair shining like silk, with her two purty eyes and her beautiful smile, and the way she'd walk, just as if she was treading on air! Why, you'd think it was an angel coming into the house; and ivry man and woman and child would have laid down their lives for her, and for her father's too, who was as good in his way as she was in hers.

"He was a fine, noble looking gintleman, had grey hair and whiskers, but wasn't what you'd call an ould man at all. He had an eye that read you like a book; you couldn't tell a lie to his riverence aisly, he'd find you out in no time; but he was a kind-hearted, charitable gintleman, and had his hand and purse open to Catholic and Protestant alike. He had been a widow-man for years; his poor lady died shortly after Miss Alice's birth, and she being his only child, I need not tell you he loved her betther than the apple of his eye; and there was another who loved her as well as her father did, only with a different sort of love, and that was young Mr. Harry Dearl, a gintleman that was in the navy, and was only waiting for his ship to make Miss Alice his wife.

"And these were the people Black Bill had such murdering designs on! 'Not,' says I, 'while Biddy Muldowney can prevent it!' and with that I started up to make for home once more.

"I crossed the road to the turning, when there suddenly came round the corner the figure of a man. The moon was at me back, and the light falling full on his face, he looked for all the world like a ghost. When the man cried out, in a pleasant voice, 'Is that you, Biddy Muldowney? The top of the morning to ye!' I gave one screech, that you could have heard down in the town, 'twixt joy and fear, and staggering over to where he was, I cotch hoult of him by the arm, and 'Oh Mick, avick!' says I, 'is it raally you that's in it?' (for I thought, ma'am, in the first look I gave him, it was Pat the Bachelor, who, the people said, *walked* —and, indade, Mick Hayden wasn't unlike him).

"'Arrah, Biddy,' says he, 'is it drunk or draming ye are?'

"'Naythe̊r,' says I; 'but oh, Mick, if you only knew——' and there I stopped, for I wasn't going to tell him anything.

"'Knew what?' said he.

"'The fright you gave me,' says I, for an excuse, 'for I thought you were a dead man.'

"'Biddy,' said he, in a joking way, 'I'm afeard that last glass they gave you, wherever you were, didn't agree with you.'

"'Oh, Mick!' says I, 'don't laugh at me, but for the sake of the eternal repose of all that is dear and near to you, turn back and see me to me own dure.'

"'Why, Biddy, woman, you needn't be afeard; ten minutes before I left me house the cock crew.'

"'Oh, did he?' says I, 'thin it's all right; good morning to you, Mick, and good luck!' (for I knew the poor man was going

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to a farm he had three miles the other side of the town; it was harvest time, and farmers had to be up early). So I turned to go home, when Mick, who was not to be done out of his joke, called afther me:

"'I say, Biddy, the next time they gives you a drop of the cratur laving the house, just ax 'em to put a leetle wather in it!'

"I got home, raised the latch of the dure, said me prayers, and went to bed."

"But why, Biddy," I here interrupted, "did your fear cease when you heard that the cock crew?"

"Oh, ma'am, don't you know that when Saint Pether of ould denied our Lord, it was, they say, between day and dark, and Pether went on denying and denying until the cock crew; then the evil sperit that was in Saint Pether's heart, when he heard the cock, had to make off on the minute, and Pether, coming to himself, looked at his blessed Master and wept bitterly; and from that day to this no evil sperit can come nigh anyone afther the cock crows.

"Well, I went to bed, but I couldn't sleep. I tossed and tumbled, I groaned and I grumbled, and me pore husband Pat (since then dead and gone many a year, rest his sowl!) would say, 'What in the world is the matther wid ye, Biddy, that you can't sleep?'

"I said I was over-fatigued, for I wasn't going to tell him either, as he sometimes tuk a drop, pore man, and couldn't keep a secret.

"The morning soon came, and afther getting Pat out to his work, I bethought me what I would do. I knew Miss Alice was an early riser; they used to sit down to their breakfast at eight o'clock, and then she would go out to the farmyard and into the garden to see that things were going on well. 'That will be the time to spake to her,' says I.

"So, afther giving Pat his breakfast (he used to come home for it at eight o'clock), I got ready, med meself tidy, and set out for the Rectory. It was the other side of the town, and had a grand avenue leading up to the house; but there was another way of going there, too, and that was up a hill this side of it, on the top of which the church was built, and forenent the church gate there was a door that let you down what was called the dark walk; at the end of this a small gate let you into the pleasure garden, which was always beautiful and filled with grand flowers. It was a two-storied house; the drawing-room, library and housekeeper's room were all on the ground floor, and you could aisily step into any of the lower rooms from the garden.

"I met very few in my walk that morning. I came down the dark walk, went round be the garden, and opened a dure that led into the yard. The first person I saw was a very dacent boy,

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Tom Whelan by name, that had been living with Mr. Leslie from the time he first cum there.

"'Good-morrow, Tom,' says I; 'do you know where Miss Alice might be found? I have a hin,' says I, 'that's hatching, and hearing that there is a grand breed of fowl here, I just cum over to see if Miss Alice could obligate me with a dozen eggs.' I hadn't a hin in the world, ma'am, at that moment, but when I went about telling a lie, I thought I might as well tell a good one.

"'You're just in time,' says Tom, 'for Miss Alice is out in the farmyard now.'

"I thanked him, and walking across the yard, went into the haggard and on to the farmyard. Miss Alice was at that moment spaking to Mary Moran, the farmyard woman. She had her back to me, and I couldn't help admiring her figure as she stood in her white spotted calico dress, linen collar and cuffs, and her broad white garden hat. She turned and saw me, and said, 'Good-morrow, Mrs. Muldowney; what can I do for you this morning?'

"'I want a dozen of eggs from you, miss, if you can spare them,' says I, 'of that grand new breed that ivry one is speaking about. I have a good hin hatching, and it is a pity to lose the chance.'

"'Indade it is, Biddy,' says she, and turning to Mary Moran (who hed her mouth and eyes wide open to hear what I had to say), said 'go in, Mary, and see if you have a dozen of those eggs to spare.'

"Mary went into the farmhouse, and then I went up quickly and said, 'Can you give me five minutes' conversation with you, miss? It is a matter of life and death; but no one must be the wiser for me spaking to you. The eggs, miss, was all a blind; I don't want them; but, oh! miss, try and let me tell you what I have to tell.'

"Miss Alice looked at me for a minute, as if she thought I had gone mad.

"'Of course, Biddy, I will speak to you. I hear the woman coming back; take the eggs, go back through the yard and round to the library window, and wait there for me.'

"Mary brought the eggs; I tuk them in me apron, thanked Miss Alice, and passing through the yard, came to the library window and waited for the young lady. She was not long in coming to the window and opening it from the inside. (It could open out like a door, and there were two steps up to it outside.) She brought me in, shut out the door again, and half drew a curtain. She made me sit down, and said, 'No one will see you here, so don't be afraid, but tell me what you have to say at once.'

"'Oh, miss,' said I, 'ask his riverence to come in also, and then I can tell you both.'

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"She went out of the room, and in a few minutes returned with Mr. Leslie. Well, to make a long story short, I up and tould him everything—me lonely walk, the fright I got, my sitting down outside the haunted forge, and the confab I heard from thim awful villains. When I had said all my say, Mr. Leslie got up and said, 'Biddy Muldowney, you are a good woman; very few of your class would have come here to tell me what you have told, they would have let me take me chance; and while I live I will never forget it. You will always have a good friend in me;' and the nice gintleman put out his hand and shook hands with me.

"'But oh, papa, what shall we do? It is to-night the dreadful wretches have laid out to come here.'

"'Don't be alarmed, me pet,' says he, 'we have plenty of time to think what we shall do. The worst of the whole matter, in my eyes, is to think of Hetty's deceit—a girl I have almost reared and educated. I wonder why she could do such a thing.'

"'Sir,' I said, 'I know why. Larry Dunne has been courting her this long time. I knew him the minute I heard his voice last night, and I suppose he has promised to marry her if she will help him in this.'

"'Very likely,' said he.

"'And now, sir,' said I, 'I'll be going; and, Miss Alice, now I thinks of it, there is a neighbour next dure that has a hatching hin; I'll bring home the eggs, put them under the hin, and so turn that lie into a truth' (Miss Alice couldn't help smiling); so I tuk me lave, went out through the garden, up the dark walk and home with me as fast as I could go.

"Well, ma'am, what happened that night everyone knew next day; but I did not hear particulars until nearly a week afther, from Miss Alice herself."

I now prefer to drop Biddy's "vernacular" for awhile, and give the reader an account of what befel the household on that eventful day and night.

The first thing Mr. Leslie did was to order his horse and ride over to the nearest magistrate. Having had an hour's chat with him, he came home and put his house in proper order to receive his daring visitors.

He had cautioned Alice not to show, by word or look, any of the disgust she naturally felt to the parlour-maid, Hester O'Connor, for her deceit in the matter, but to let everything go on as quietly as usual.

Six o'clock dinner over, Alice and her father went into the library, and seeing that the house was quiet (the other servants, all women, had not the slightest idea of what was going on), rang the bell and asked Hetty (as she was usually called) if all the out-doors were locked as usual, the shutters closed, &c.

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This was an every-night question, so it did not cause the girl any alarm.

She was a low-sized, stout, rather good-looking girl; but had one peculiarity—she never looked one straight in the face, when either giving or receiving a message. She seemed nervous this night, but said, "Everything, sir, is as usual."

"Are you sure of that, Hetty?" said Mr. Leslie.

"Sure and certain, sir," she answered, with a bold toss of her head; "there are the keys, and you can go and see for yourself whether the doors are locked or not."

Hetty knew she was safe in saying this, as in any case they were not coming in by the doors.

She was turning to leave the room—it was nearly nine o'clock by this—when Mr. Leslie put his hand on her shoulder and said, "Wait a moment, Hetty, I wish to show you something in the next room."

I think it has been mentioned that there was a door opening out of this room into the housekeeper's, without going into the passage. Mr. Leslie led the girl gently across the library, and bringing her into the housekeeper's room, where she was to have let in the band of White Feet, she saw that it was filled with policemen. She started back with a cry of horror, and nearly fainted.

"Now, listen to me," said Mr. Leslie. "All your treachery has come to my knowledge in a way you little know; you did not care what might have happened—aye, and what may still happen—from this night's work; blood might be spilt, even life taken, and you have not cared; you have lived under this roof for years, have been kindly taught your duties as a servant, have been well fed, well clothed, and well cared for—and this is your return to us!"

The misguided girl went down upon her knees and sobbed as if her heart would break.

"Oh, sir! oh, sir! forgive me! I hardly knew what I was doing. Do, sir, forgive me this once!"

"I cannot say I forgive you, Hetty, for I do not think your repentance genuine; but still, to give you a chance of saving yourself (for I can have you put in prison to-morrow for aiding these wretches), I now call upon you to help us by not giving them the slightest warning that they are expected—nay, more than that—you must appear at the window at the appointed hour and let them come in."

"Oh, sir!" said Hetty, "don't ask me to do that!"

"I insist upon it," said Mr. Leslie; "you had no pity on me or mine when they were planning our destruction, and you cannot claim my pity when I demand your help in bringing them to justice. However, take your choice—either go to prison, or stay and do as I ask."

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She considered a moment, and then said:

"I will do whatever you tell me, sir."

"Yes, sir, you are right," said the head-constable, "she must do one or the other; and look here, my girl," said he, looking sternly at her, "when you are giving them the beck to come in, if by word or sign you try to warn them, whatever comes of it, I will shoot you dead upon the spot. We have had too much trouble in looking after this same Mr. Black Bill to let him and his accomplices off when we have them in our clutches; so take friendly advice and save your own skin."

Whether the man meant it seriously or only intended to frighten her, is not known, but his threat cowed her thoroughly.

It was now near the appointed time—half-past ten o'clock. The room the marauders were to enter (save for the moonlight) was in darkness, and, by an ingenious arrangement of furniture, a great many of the men were easily concealed.

Mr. Leslie and Alice were standing at the open door of the library, he with a pistol in hand. Two policemen—powerful young fellows—stood ready for action, one at each side of the window, completely concealed from outside observation. The girl Hetty was standing in the centre of the room, with an ashy pale face, waiting for the signal. The shutters and windows were open, and everything was silent as the grave.

In a few minutes a slight sound was heard on the gravel; the policeman made a sign to Hetty, she went forward, looked out and said, "All right," drew in her head quickly, and ran into a corner of the room.

In another moment there appeared at the window first a foot and leg, and then the broad shoulders and head of Black Bill came half way into the room; being tall, he had to stoop a good deal, and while in that position, and before he had time to pull in his other leg or take his body back again, the two policemen rushed forward, threw him heavily on his face, and while one tied a soft cap over his mouth, two others handcuffed his hands and bound his feet. It was all done so quickly and unexpectedly that the ruffian had not time either to resist or cry out.

Larry Dunne had now also put in his foot and leg, but whether the two next policemen were less active or he saw Black Bill on the floor, I cannot say; but, although not able to escape, he cried out with a loud voice, "Treachery! boys, treachery!" and immediately a scampering of many feet showed that the alarm was heard and understood.

After a short struggle, Larry was also overpowered and handcuffed, and Mr. Leslie, bringing in lights, had the window properly secured, fearing that a strong force might return to attempt the rescue of their chief. They had no such intention, however, being cowards at heart, and only kept up to their deeds

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of wickedness by the ferocity of Bill and the personal fear which he inspired.

So there stood Mr. Leslie, with Alice hanging on his arm, and there in a row behind were the trembling servants, who had come to the library on hearing the noise; and there, still on the floor, sat the two sullen-looking wretches. Black Bill, from whose face the cap had now been taken, looked like an entrapped wild animal; once only he raised his eyes, and they rested for a moment on the sweet, pale face of Alice, and then one plainly heard the grinding of his strong white teeth, as the thought of how he was baffled came home to him.

Larry Dunne was not so quiet; he bemoaned his fate in language not very choice; cursed everyone present, without fear or favour, and turning to the girl Hetty, who was still crying, exclaimed, "'Twas all your fault, you —— traitress! All I wish for is one moment's freedom, to lave me mark on you, me beauty!"

Mr. Leslie here interposed, telling the man he would gain nothing by such unseemly temper, and desired the room to be left to the police and prisoners. Lights were brought sufficient to last the night, and all retired to their rooms—but not to sleep.

The night passed quietly, and in the early morning a strong force of mounted police, with a detachment of military, arrived to take the prisoners before the magistrate, who, having received full particulars from Mr. Leslie, had a warrant made out, and they were at once placed on a car, and accompanied by the strong escort, conveyed to the county gaol.

"I needn't take up your time, ma'am," continued Biddy, "telling you about their trial. Black Bill was convicted of having committed so many murthers, that he was sentenced to be hung, and in two months from that time had to suffer, in sight of a multitude of people.

"Larry Dunne, the dirty sneak, saved his own bones by turning informer, and many was the house he med disolate be that; for it turned out there was many a boy that was mixed up with the business that you wouldn't suspect to be in it at all; and some of them were transported for life, and many got fourteen years. At all events the counthry got rid of thim, and we have had pace and aise since."

"And what became of the girl Hetty?" I asked.

"Oh, Mr. Leslie sent her up to Dublin the very day the boys went to prison, and afther that we heard she went to America—her life wouldn't have been worth an hour's purchase here."

"And the Leslies—what of them?"

"Not long afther, Mr. Harry got his ship and came home a captain, and there was a grand wedding at the Rectory. Ah, that was a day! when all the girls of the village was dressed up in

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white, and they and the childre all round about come with their laps full of flowers to throw under Miss Alice's feet when she was coming out of the church, laning on her young husband's arm, and he looking so proud and handsome, and his riverence looking so noble and happy; and she, 'with the tear in her eye, but the smile on her lip,' looking lovely; and the childre cheering as if they'd burst their throats. Ah! 'twas a grand sight! And when the carriage came that was to take her away to her new home, didn't everyone in the place come out to bid her good-bye! Sure never did a lady leave her home with more prayers and blessings on her head.

"She went away to foreign parts, and it was thought she'd come back some day to see her father, but that was not to be. About a year after she went away, Mr. Leslie went to see a sick man at the other ind of the parish. It was an awful wet day; he caught cold, tuk the fever and died. Ah, ma'am, that was a sad day for us all! The whole counthry for miles came in to his funeral, every shop in the town was shut, and every blind was drawn down to do honour to him. The church was crowded with people, and when they put the coffin down in the grave there wasn't a dry eye in the place. Faith, ma'am, they didn't show more respect to their own parish priest when it pleased the Lord to call him."

"Did the people ever find out who warned Mr. Leslie?"

"They did, ma'am; afther some years it leaked out, as things will. They were at first inclined to look shy at me, but when they remimbered the good I did to Mr. Leslie and his daughter, who they all really loved, they afther awhile forgave me."

So Biddy's story coming to a conclusion, and as the evening was now fine and bright, I thanked her for her story and took my departure; and since then, during my leisure moments, I have jotted down Biddy Muldowney's version of "The Haunted Forge."

EMILY BEAUCHAMP.

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PARSIFAL.

THE BLOOD OF GOD!—mystic symbol of Divine life—"for the blood is the life thereof." That is the key-note of "Parsifal," the Knight of the Sangrail.

Wine is the ready vehicle—the material link between the divine and the human life.

In the old religions, that heightened consciousness, that intensity of feeling produced by stimulant, was thought to be the very entering in of the "god"—the union of the Divine and human spirit; and in the Eleusinian mysteries, the "sesame"—the bread of Demeter, the earth mother; the "kykeon," or wine of Dionysos—the vine god—were thus sacramental.

The passionate desire to approach and mingle with Deity is the one mystic bond common to all religions in all lands. It is the "cry of the human": it traverses the ages, it exhausts many symbols and transcends all forms.

To the Christian it is summed up in the "Lord's Supper."

The mediæval legend of the Sangrail (real blood) is the most poetic and pathetic form of transubstantiation—in it the gross materialism of the Roman Mass almost ceases to be repulsive, it possesses the true legendary power of attraction and assimilation.

As the Knights of the Table Round, with their holy vows, provided mediæval Chivalry with a centre, so did the Lord's table, with its Sangrail, provide mediæval Religion with its central attractive point. And as all marvellous tables of knightly heroism circled round King Arthur's table, so did the great legends embodying the Christian conceptions of sin, punishment and redemption circle round the Sangrail and the sacrifice of the "mass."

In the legends of "Parsifal" and "Lohengrin" the knightly and religious elements are welded together. This is enough. We need approach "Parsifal," with no deep knowledge of the various Sagas made use of by Wagner in his drama. His disciples, whilst most eager to trace its various elements to their sources, are most emphatic in declaring that the drama, so intimately true to the spirit of Roman Catholicism, is nevertheless a new creation.

Joseph of Arimathæa received in a crystal cup the blood of Christ as it flowed from the spear-wound, made by the Roman soldier. The cup and the spear were committed to Titurel, who

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became a holy knight and head of a sacred brotherhood of knights. They dwelt in the Vizigoth Mountains of Southern Spain, where, amidst impenetrable forests, rose the legendary palace of Montsalvat. Here they guarded the sacred relics, issuing forth at times from their palatial fortress, like Lohengrin, to fight for innocence and right, and always returning to renew their youth and strength by the celestial contemplation of the Sangrail, and by occasional participation in the holy feast.

Time and history count for very little in these narratives. It was allowed, however, that Titurel the Chief had grown extremely aged, but as it was not allowed that he could die in the presence of the Sangrail, he seemed to have been laid in a kind of trance, resting in an open tomb beneath the altar of the Grail; and whenever the cup was uncovered his voice might be heard joining in the celebration. Meanwhile, Amfortis, his son, reigned in his stead.

Montsalvat, with its pure, contemplative, but active brotherhood, and its mystic cup, thus stands out as the poetic symbol of all that is highest and best in mediæval Christianity.

The note of the wicked world—Magic for Devotion—Sensuality for Worship—breaks in upon our vision, as the scene changes from the halls of Montsalvat to Klingsor's palace. Klingsor, an impure knight, who has been refused admittance to the order of the "Sangrail," enters into a compact with the powers of evil—by magic acquires arts of diabolical fascination—fills his palace and gardens with enchantments, and wages bitter war against the holy knights, with a view of corrupting them, and ultimately, it may be, of acquiring for himself the "Sangrail," in which all power is believed to reside.

Many knights have already succumbed to the "insidious arts" of Klingsor, but the tragical turning point of the "Parsifal" is that Amfortis, himself the son of Titurel, the official guardian of the Grail, in making war upon the magician, took with him the sacred spear, and *lost* it to Klingsor.

It came about in this way. A woman of unearthly loveliness won him in the enchanted bowers, adjoining the evil knight's palace, and Klingsor, seizing the holy spear, thrust it into Amfortis' side, inflicting therewith an incurable wound.

The brave knight, Gurnemanz, dragged his master fainting from the garden, his companions of the Sangrail covering their retreat. But returned to Montsalvat, the unhappy king awakes only to bewail his sin, the loss of the sacred spear, and the ceaseless harrowing smart of an incurable wound. But who is Parsifal?

* * * * *

The smell of pine-woods in July! The long avenue outside the city of Bayreuth, that leads straight up the hill, crowned by the Wagner Theatre, a noble structure—architecturally admirable—

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severe, simple, but exactly adapted to its purpose . . . . I join the stream of pilgrims, some in carriages, others on foot. As we approach, a clear blast of trombones and brass from the terrace in front of the grand entrance, plays out the Grail "motive." It is the well-known signal—there is no time to be lost. I enter at a prescribed door, and find myself close to my appointed place. Every one—such is the admirable arrangement—seems to do likewise. In a few minutes about one thousand persons are seated without confusion. The theatre is darkened, the footlights are lowered, the prelude begins.

Act I.

The waves of sound rise from the shadowy gulph sunken between the audience and the footlights. Upon the sound ocean of "wind" the "take eat," or "love-feast" motive floats. Presently the "strings" pierce through it, the spear motive follows, and then, full of heavy pain, "Drink ye all of this," followed by the famous Grail motive—an old chorale used by Mendelssohn in the Reformation Symphony. Then comes the noble faith and love theme.

As I sit in the low light, amidst the silent throng, and listen, I need no interpreter, I am being placed in possession of the emotional key-notes of the drama. Every subject is first distinctly enunciated, and then all are wondrously blended together. There is the pain of sacrifice—the mental agony, the bodily torture—there are the alternate pauses of sorrow and respite from sorrow long drawn out, the sharp ache of sin, the glimpses of unhallowed joy, the strain of upward endeavour, the serene peace of faith and love, crowned by the blessed vision of the Grail. 'Tis past. The prelude melts into the opening recitative.

The eyes have now to play their part. The curtain rises, the story begins.

The morning breaks slowly, the grey streaks redden, a lovely summer landscape lies bathed in primrose light. Under the shadow of a noble tree, the aged knight, Gurnemanz, has been resting with two young attendants. From the neighbouring halls of Montsalvat the solemn *reveillé*—the Grail motive—rings out, and all three sink on their knees in prayer.

The sun bursts forth in splendour, as the hymn rises to mingle with the voices of universal nature. The waves of sound well up and fill the soul with unspeakable thankfulness and praise.

The talk is of Amfortis, the king, and of his incurable wound. A wild gallop, a rush of sound, and a weird woman, with streaming hair, springs towards the startled group. She bears a phial, with rare balsam from the Arabian shores. It is for the king's wound.

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Who is the wild horsewoman?—Kundry—strange creation—a being doomed to wander—like the Wandering Jew, the Wild Huntsman, or Flying Dutchman—always seeking a deliverance she cannot find—Kundry, who, in ages gone by, met the Saviour on the road to Calvary, and derided him. Some said she was Herodias' daughter. Now filled with remorse, yet weighted with sinful longings, she serves by turns the knights of the Grail, then falls under the spell of Klingsor, the evil knight sorcerer, and in the guise of an enchantress, is compelled by him to seduce, if possible, the knights of the Grail.

Eternal symbol of the divided allegiance of a woman's soul! She it was who, under the sensual spell, as an incarnation of loveliness, overcame Amfortis, and she it is now who, in her ardent quest for salvation—changed and squalid in appearance—serves the Knights of the Grail, and seeks to heal Amfortis' wound!

No sooner has she delivered her balsam to the faithful Gurnemanz, and thrown herself exhausted upon the grass—where she lies gnawing her hair morosely—than a change in the sound atmosphere, which never ceases to be generated in the mystic orchestral gulph, presages the approach of Amfortis.

He comes, borne on a litter, to his morning bath in the shining lake hard by.

Sharp is the pain of the wound—weary and hopeless is the king. Through the wound motive comes the sweet woodland music and the breath of the blessed morning, fragrant with flowers and fresh with dew. It is one of those incomparable bursts of woodland notes, full of birdsong and the happy hum of insect life and rustling of netted branches and waving of long tasselled grass. I know of nothing like it save the forest music in "Siegefried."

The sick king listens, and remembers words of hope and comfort that fell from a heavenly voice—what time the glory of the Grail passed—

> "By pity 'lightened,
> A guileless fool—
> Wait for him,
> My chosen tool."

They hand him the phial of balsam; and presently, whilst the lovely forest music again breaks forth, the king is carried on to his bath, and Kundry, Gurnemanz, and the two esquires hold the stage.

As the old knight, who is a complete repertory of facts connected with the Grail tradition, unfolds to the esquires the nature of the king's wound, the sorceries of Klingsor, the hope of deliverance from some unknown "guileless fool," a sudden cry breaks up the situation.

A white swan, pierced by an arrow, flutters dying to the ground. It is the swan beloved of the Grail brotherhood, bird of fair omen, symbol of spotless purity. The slayer is brought in between two

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knights—a stalwart youth, fearless, unabashed—whilst the death-music of the swan, the slow distilling and stiffening of its life-blood, is marvellously rendered by the orchestra. Conviction of his fault comes over the youth as he listens to the reproaches of Gurnemanz. He hangs his head, ashamed and penitent, and at last with a sudden passion of remorse snaps his bow, and flings it aside. The swan is borne off, and Parsifal (the "guileless fool," for he it is), with Gurnemanz and Kundry—who rouses herself and surveys Parsifal with strange, almost savage curiosity—hold the stage.

In this scene Kundry tells the youth more than he cares to hear about himself. How that his father, Gamuret, was a great knight killed in battle, how that his mother, Herzeleide (Heart's Affliction), fearing a like fate for her son, brought him up in the lonely forest; how he left her to follow a troop of knights that he met one day winding through the forest glade, and being led on and on in pursuit of them, never overtook them and never returned to his mother, Heart's Affliction, who died of grief. At this point the frantic youth seizes Kundry by the throat in an agony of rage and grief, but is held back by Gurnemanz, till, worn out by the violence of his emotion, he faints away, and is gradually revived by Kundry and Gurnemanz.

Suddenly Kundry rises with a wild look, like one under a spell. Her mood of service is over. She staggers across the stage—she can hardly keep awake. "Sleep," she mutters, "I must sleep—sleep!" and falls down in one of those long trances which apparently lasted for months, or years, and formed the transition periods between her mood of Grail service and the Klingsor slavery into which she must next relapse in spite of herself.

And is this the guileless fool? This wild youth who slays the fair swan—who knows not his own name nor whence he comes, nor whither he goes, nor what are his destinies?

The old knight eyes him curiously—he will put him to the test. This youth had seen the king pass once—he had marked his pain. Was he "enlightened by pity?" Is he the appointed deliverer? The old knight now invites him to the shrine of the Grail. "What is the Grail?" asks the youth. Truly a guileless, innocent fool! yet a brave and pure knight, since he has known no evil, and so readily repents of a fault committed in ignorance.

Gurnemanz is strangely drawn to him. He shall see the Grail and in the Holy Palace what time the mystic light streams forth and the assembled knights bow themselves in prayer, the voice which comforted Amfortis shall speak to his deliverer and bid him arise and heal the king.

Gurnemanz and Parsifal have ceased to speak. They stand in the glowing light of the summerland. The tide of music rolls on continuously, but sounds more strange and dreamy.

Is it a cloud passing over the sky? There seems to be a shud-

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dering in the branches—the light fades upon yonder sunny woodlands—the foreground darkens apace. The whole scene is moving, but so slowly that it seems to change like a dissolving view. I see the two figures of Gurnemanz and Parsifal advancing through the trees—they are lost behind yonder rock. They emerge further off—higher up. The air grows very dim; the orchestra peals louder and louder. I lose the two in the deepening twilight. The forest is changing, the land is wild and mountainous. Huge galleries and arcades, rock-hewn, loom through the trees, but all is growing dark. I listen to the murmurs of the "Grail," the "spear," the "pain," the "love and faith" motives—hollow murmurs, confused, floating out of the depths of lonely caves. Then I have a feeling of void and hollow darkness, and there comes a sighing as of a soul swooning away in a trance, and a vision of waste places and wild caverns; and then through the confused dream I hear the solemn boom of mighty bells, only muffled. They keep time as to some ghostly march. I strain my eyes into the thick gloom before me. Is it rock, or forest, or palace?

As the light returns slowly, a hall of more than Alhambra-like splendour opens before me. My eyes are rivetted on the shining pillars of variegated marble, the tesselated pavements, the vaulted roof glowing with gold and colour; beyond, arcades of agate columns, bathed in a misty moonlight air, and lost in a bewildering perspective of halls and corridors.

I hear the falling of distant water in marble fonts; the large bells of Montsalvat peal louder and louder, and to music of unimaginable stateliness the knights enter in solemn procession, clad in the blue and red robes of the Grail, and take their seats at two semicircular tables which start like arms to the right and left of the holy shrine. Beneath it lies Titurel entranced, and upon it is presently deposited the sacred treasure of the Grail itself.

As the wounded King Amfortis is borne in, the assembled knights, each standing in his place, a golden cup before him, intone the Grail motive, which is taken up by the entering choruses of servitors and esquires bearing the holy relics.

Gurnemanz is seated amongst the knights, Parsifal stands aside and looks on in mute astonishment, "a guileless fool."

As the Holy Grail is set down on the altar before the wounded king, a burst of heavenly music streams from the high dome—voices of angels intone the celestial phrases, "*take eat*" and "*this is my blood!*" and blend them with the "faith and love" motives. As the choruses die away, the voice of the entranced Titurel is heard from beneath the altar calling upon Amfortis, his son, to uncover the Grail that he may find refreshment and life in the blessed vision.

Then follows a terrible struggle in the breast of Amfortis. *He*, sore stricken in sin, yet guardian of the Holy Grail, guilty

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among the guiltless, oppressed with pain, bowed down with shame, craving for restoration, o'erwhelmed with unworthiness, yet chosen to stand and minister before the Lord on behalf of His saints! Pathetic situation, which must in all times repeat itself in the history of the Church. The unworthiness of the minister affects not the validity of his consecrated acts. Yet what agony of mind must many a priest have suffered, himself oppressed with sin and doubt, whilst dispensing the means of grace, and acting as a minister and steward of the mysteries.

The marvellous piece of self-analysis in which the conscience-stricken king bewails his lot, as little admits of description here as the music which embodies his emotions.

At the close of it angel voices seem floating in mid-air, sighing the mystic words:

"By pity enlightened,
The guileless fool—
Wait for him,
My chosen tool."

And immediately afterwards the voice of Titurel, like one turning restlessly in his sleep, comes up from his living tomb beneath the altar, "*Uncover the Grail!*"

With trembling hands the sick king raises himself, and with a great effort staggers towards the shrine—the covering is removed—he takes the crystal cup—he raises it on high—the blood is dark—the light begins to fade in the hall—a mist and dimness comes over the scene—we seem to be assisting at a shadowy ceremony in a dream—the big bells are tolling—the heavenly choirs from above the dome, which is now bathed in twilight, are heard: "*Drink ye all of this.*" Amfortis raises on high the crystal vase—the knights fall on their knees in prayer. Suddenly a faint tremor of light quivers in the crystal cup—then the blood glows ruby red for a moment. Amfortis waves it to and fro—the knights gaze in ecstatic adoration. Titurel's voice gathers strength in his tomb:

"Celestial rapture!
How streams the light upon the face of God!"

The light fades slowly out of the crystal cup—the miracle is accomplished—the blood again grows dark—the light of common day returns to the halls of Montsalvat, and the knights resume their seats, to find each one his golden goblet filled with wine.

During the sacred repast which follows the brotherhood join hands and embrace, singing:

"Blessed are they that believe;
Blessed are they that love!"

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and the refrain is heard again far up in the heights, re-echoed by the angelic hosts.

* * * * *

I looked round upon the silent audience whilst these astonishing scenes were passing before me; the whole assembly was motionless—all seemed to be solemnised by the august spectacle—seemed almost to share in the devout contemplation and trance-like worship of the holy knights. Every thought of the stage had vanished—nothing was further from my own thoughts than play-acting. I was sitting as I should sit at an oratorio, in devout and rapt contemplation. Before my eyes had passed a symbolic vision of prayer and ecstacy, flooding the soul with overpowering thoughts of the Divine sacrifice and the mystery of unfathomable love.

* * * * *

The hall of Montsalvat empties. Gurnemanz strides excitedly up to Parsifal who stands stupefied with what he has seen—

> "Why standest thou silent?
> Knowest thou what thine eyes have seen?"

The guileless fool shakes his head. "Nothing but a fool!" exclaims Gurnemanz, angrily, and seizing Parsifal by the shoulder, he pushes him roughly out of the hall, with:

> "Be off! look after thy geese,
> And henceforth leave our swans in peace."

The Grail vision had, then, taught the "guileless fool" nothing. He could not see his mission—he was as yet unawakened to the deeper life of the spirit; though blameless and unsullied, he was still the "natural man." Profound truth! that was not first which was spiritual, but that which was natural: before Parsifal wins a spiritual triumph, he must be spiritually tried, his inner life must be deepened and developed, else he can never read aright the message of the Grail.

The life of God in the spirit comes only when the battle for God in the heart has been fought and won.

Fare forth thou guileless fool! thou shalt yet add to the simplicity of the dove the wisdom of the serpent. Thou art innocent because ignorant; but thou shalt be weighed anon in the balance and not be found wanting; and then shalt thou re-conquer the holy spear lost in sin, re-won in purity and sacrifice, and be to the frail Amfortis the chosen saviour for whom he waits.

The foregoing events occupied about an hour and a quarter. When the curtain fell, the vast audience broke up in silence.

The air outside was cool and balmy. In the distance lay the city of Bayreuth, with the tower of the Alte Schloss and the old church standing up grey against the distant Bavarian hills.

All around us lay the pine woods, broken by the lawns and

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avenues that encircle the theatre and embower it in a secluded world of its own—even as the Palace of the Grail was shut off from the profane world.

Here, indeed, is truly the Montsalvat of the modern drama—a spot purified and sacred to the highest aims and noblest manifestations of Art.

In about an hour the Spear motive was the signal blown on the wind instruments outside, and I took my seat for the second act.

Act II.

A restless, passion-tossed prelude. The "Grail" subject distorted, the "spear" motive thrust in discordant, the "faith and love" theme fluttering like a wounded dove in pain, fierce bursts of passion, wild shocks of uncontrolled misery, mingling with the "carnal joy" music of Klingsor's magic garden and the shuddering might of his alchemy.

The great magician, Klingsor, is seen alone in his dungeon palace—harsh contrast to the gorgeous halls of Montsalvat. Here all is built of the live rock, an impenetrable fastness, the home of devilish might and terrible spells.

Klingsor is aware of the coming struggle, and he means to be ready for it. He owns the sacred spear wrested from Amfortis; he even aspires to win the Grail; he knows the "guileless fool" is on his way to wrest that spear from him. His only hope is in paralysing the fool by his enchantments as he paralysed Amfortis, and the same woman will serve his turn.

"Kundry!" The time is come, the spells are woven—blue vapours rise, and in the midst of the blue vapours, the figure of the still sleeping Kundry is seen. She wakes, trembling violently; she knows she is again under the spell she abhors—the spell to do evil, the mission to corrupt. With a shuddering scream she stands before her tormentor, denying his power, loathing to return to her vile mission, yet returning, as with a bitter cry she vanishes from his presence.

Parsifal has invaded Klingsor's realm; the evil knights have fled before his prowess, wounded and in disorder. Kundry is commissioned to meet the guileless youth in the enchanted garden and, all other allurements failing, to subdue him by her irresistible fascinations and hand him over to Klingsor.

In a moment the scenery lifts, and a garden of marvellous beauty and extent lies before us. The flowers are all of colossal dimensions—huge roses hang in tangled festoons, the cactus, the lily, the blue-bell, creepers and orchids of enormous size and dazzling colour wave in mid-air, and climb the aromatic trees.

On a bright hill appears Parsifal, standing bewildered by the light and loveliness around him. Beautiful girls, dressed

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like flowers, and hardly distinguishable from them at first, rush in, bewailing their wounded and disabled knights, but on seeing Parsifal, fall upon their new prey, and surrounding him, sing verse after verse of the loveliest ballet music, whilst trying to embrace him, and quarrelling with each other for the privilege.

About that wonderful chorus of flower-girls there was just a suggestive touch of the Rhine maiden's singing. It belonged to the same school of thought and feeling, but was freer, wilder—more considerable, and altogether more complex and wonderful in its changes and in the marvellous confusion in which it breaks up.

The guileless fool resists these charmers, and they are just about to leave him in disgust, when the roses lift on one side, and, stretched on a mossy bank overhung with flowers, appears a woman of unearthly loveliness. It is Kundry transformed, and in the marvellous duet which follows between her and Parsifal, a perfectly new and original type of love duet is struck out—an analysis of character, unique in musical drama—a combination of sentiment and a situation absolutely novel, which could only have been conceived and carried out by a creative genius of the highest order.

First, I note that the once spell-bound Kundry is devoted utterly to her task of winning Parsifal; into this she throws all the intensity of her wild and desperate nature, but in turn she is strangely affected by the spiritual atmosphere of the "guileless fool"—a feeling comes over her in the midst of her witchcraft passion, that he is in some way to be her saviour too; yet, woman-like, she conceives of her salvation as possible only in union with him. Yet was this the very crime to which Klingsor would drive her for the ruin of Parsifal. Strange confusion of thought, feeling, aspiration, longing!—struggle of irreconcileable elements! How shall she reconcile them? Her intuition fails her not, and her tact triumphs. She will win by stealing his love through his mother's love. A mother's love is holy—that love she tells him of—it can never more be his—but she will replace it—her passion shall be sanctified by it—through *that* passion she has sinned, through it she, too, shall be redeemed. She will work out her own salvation by the very spells that are upon her for evil. He is pure—he shall make her pure, could she but win him—both, by the weight of such pure love, would surely be delivered from Klingsor the corrupter, the tormentor. Fatuous dream! How through corruption win incorruption? How through indulgence win peace and freedom from desire? It is the old cheat of the senses—Satan appears as an angel of light. The thought deludes the unhappy Kundry herself—she is no longer consciously working for Klingsor, she really believes that this new turn, this bias given to passion, will purify both her and the guileless, pure fool she seeks to subdue.

Nothing can describe the subtlety of their long interview; the

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surprising turns of sentiment and contrasts of feeling. Throughout this scene Parsifal's instinct is absolutely true and sure. Everything Kundry says about his mother, Herzeleide, he feels; but every attempt to make him accept her instead he resists. Her desperate declamation is splendid. Her heartrending sense of misery and piteous prayer for salvation, her belief that before her is her saviour could she but win him to her will, the choking fury of baffled passion, the steady and subtle encroachments made whilst Parsifal is lost in a meditative dream, the burning kiss which recalls him to himself, the fine touch by which this kiss, whilst arousing in him the stormiest feelings, causes a sharp pain, as of Amfortis' own wound, piercing his very heart. All this is realistic if you will, but it is realism raised to the sublime.

Suddenly Parsifal springs up, hurls the enchantress from him, will forth from Klingsor's realm. She is baffled, she knows it; for a moment she bars his passage, then succumbs; the might of sensuality which lost Amfortis the sacred spear, has been met and defeated by the guileless fool. He has passed from innocence to knowledge in his interview with the flower-girt girls, in his long converse with Kundry, in her insidious embrace, in her kiss; but, all these are now thrust aside, he steps forth still unconquered, still "guileless," but no more "a fool." The knowledge of good and evil has come, but the struggle is already passed.

"Yes, sinner, I do offer thee Redemption," he can say to Kundry; "not in thy way, but in thy Lord Christ's way of sacrifice!"

But the desperate creature, wild with passion, will listen to no reason; she shouts aloud to her master, and Klingsor suddenly appears, poising the sacred spear. In another moment he hurls it right across the enchanted garden at Parsifal. It cannot wound the guileless and pure one as it wounded the sinful Amfortis. A miracle! It hangs arrested in the air above Parsifal's head; he seizes it—it is the sacred talisman, one touch of which will heal even as it inflicted the king's deadly wound.

With a mighty cry and the shock as of an earthquake, the castle of Klingsor falls shattered to pieces, the garden withers up to a desert, the girls, who have rushed in, lie about amongst the withering flowers, themselves withered up and dead. Kundry sinks down in a deathly swoon, whilst Parsifal steps over a ruined wall and disappears, saluting her with the words: "Thou alone knowest when we shall meet again!"

* * * * *

The long shadows were stealing over the hills when I came out at the second pause. Those whom I met and conversed with were subdued and awed. What a solemn tragedy of human passion we had been assisting at! Not a heart there but could interpret that struggle between the flesh and the spirit from its own experiences. Not one but knew the desperately wicked and deceitful

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temptations that come like enchantresses in the wizard's garden, to plead the cause of the devil in the language of high-flown sentiment or even religious feeling.

Praise and criticism seemed dumb; we rather walked and spoke of what we had just witnessed like men convinced of judgment, and righteousness, and sin. It was a strange mood to come out of a theatre after witnessing what would commonly be called an "Opera."

I felt more than ever the impossibility of producing the "Parsifal" in London, at Drury Lane or Covent Garden, before a well-dressed company of loungers, who had well dined, and were on their way to balls and suppers afterwards.

I would as soon see the Oberammergau play at a music hall.

No; in "Parsifal" all is solemn, or all is irreverent. At Bayreuth we came on a pilgrimage; it cost us time, and trouble, and money; we were in earnest—so were the actors; the spirit of the great master who had planned every detail seemed still to preside over all; the actors lived in their parts; not a thought of self remained; no one accepted applause or recall; no one aimed at producing a personal effect; the actors were lost in the drama, and it was the drama and not the actors which had impressed and solemnised us. When I came out they asked who was Amfortis? I did not know. I said "The wounded king."

As the instruments played out the faith and love motive for us to re-enter, the mellow sunshine broke once more from the cloud-rack over city, and field, and forest, before sinking behind the long low range of the distant hills.

Act III.

The opening prelude to the third and last act seems to warn me of the lapse of time. The music is full of pain and restlessness—the pain of wretched years of lonely waiting for a deliverer, who comes not; the restlessness and misery of a hope deferred, the weariness of a life without a single joy.

The motives, discoloured as it were by grief, work up to a distorted version of the Grail subject, which breaks off as with a cry of despair.

Is the Grail, too, then turned into a mocking spirit to the unhappy Amfortis?

Relief comes to us with the lovely scene upon which the curtain rises. Again the wide summer land lies stretching away over sunlit moor and woodland. In the foreground wave the forest trees, and I hear the ripple of the woodland streams.

Invariably throughout the drama, in the midst of all human pain and passion, great Nature is there, peaceful, harmonious in

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all her loveliest moods; a paradise in which dwell souls who make of her their own purgatory.

In yonder aged figure, clad in the Grail pilgrim robe, I discern Gurnemanz; his hair is white; he stoops with years; a rude hut is hard by. Presently a groan arrests his attention, moaning as of a human thing in distress. He clears away some brushwood, and beneath it finds, waking from her long trance, the strange figure of Kundry. For how many years has she slept, we know not. Why is she now recalled to life? She staggers to her feet; we see that she too is in a pilgrim garb, with a rope girding her dress of coarse brown serge. "Service! service!" she mutters, and seizing a pitcher, moves mechanically to fill it at the well, then totters but half awake into the wooden hut. The forest music breaks forth—the hum of happy insect life, the song of wild birds. All seems to pass as in a vision; when suddenly enters a knight clad in black armour from top to toe.

The two eye him curiously, and Gurnemanz, approaching, bids him lay aside his armour and his weapons. He carries a long spear. In silence the knight unhelms, and sticking the spear into the ground, kneels before it, and remains lost in devotional contemplation. The "spear" and "Grail" motives mingle together in the full tide of orchestral sounds carrying on the emotional undercurrent of the drama. The knight is soon recognised by both as the long-lost and discarded Parsifal.

The "guileless fool" has learned wisdom, and discovered his mission—he knows now that he bears the spear which is to heal the king's grievous wound, and that he himself is his appointed successor. Through long strife and trial and pain he seems to have grown into something of Christ's own likeness—not all at once; but at last he has found the path. He returns to bear salvation and pardon both to Kundry and the wretched king, Amfortis.

The full music flows on whilst Gurnemanz relates how the knights have all grown weak and aged, deprived of the vision and sustenance of the Holy Grail, whilst the long-entranced Titurel is at last dead.

At this news Parsifal, overcome with grief, swoons away, and Gurnemanz and Kundry loosen his armour, and sprinkle him with water from the holy spring. Underneath his black suit of mail he appears clad in a long white tunic.

The grouping is here admirable; Gurnemanz is in the Templar's red and blue robe; Parsifal in white, his auburn hair parted in front, and flowing down in ringlets on either side, recalls Leonardo's favourite conception of the Saviour's head, and indeed from this point Parsifal becomes a kind of symbolic reflection of the Lord Himself. Kundry, subdued and awed, lies weeping at his feet; he lifts his hands to bless her with infinite pity. She washes his feet, and dries them with the hairs of her head. It is

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a bold stroke, but the voices of nature, the murmur of the summer woods, come with an infinite healing tenderness and pity, and the act is seen to be symbolical of the pure devotion of a sinful creature redeemed from sin. Peace has at last entered into that wild and troubled heart, and restless Kundry delivered from Klingsor's spell, receives the sprinkling of baptismal water at the hands of Parsifal.

The great spaces of silence in the dialogue, broken now by a few sentences from Parsifal, now from Gurnemanz, are more eloquent than many words. The tidal music flows on in a ceaseless stream of changing harmonies, returning constantly to the sweet and slumbrous sound of the summer land, full of teeming life and glowing happiness.

Then Gurnemanz takes up his parable. It is the Blessed Good Friday on which the dear Lord suffered. The love and faith phrases are chimed forth, the pain-notes of the Cross agony are sounded and pass, the Grail motive seems to swoon away in descending harmonies, sinking into the woodland voices of universal nature—that trespass-pardoned nature that now seems waking to the day of her glory and innocence.

In that solemn moment Parsifal bends over the subdued and humbled Kundry, and kisses her softly on the brow—*her* wild kiss in the garden had kindled in him fierce fire, mingled with the bitter wound-pain; *his* is the seal of her eternal pardon and peace.

In the distance the great bells of Montsalvat are now heard booming solemnly—the air darkens, the light fades out, the slow motion of all the scenery recommences, again I hear the wild cave music, strange and hollow sounding—the three move on as in a dream, and are soon lost in the deep shadows; and through all, louder and louder, boom the heavy bells of Montsalvat, until the stage brightens, and we find ourselves once more in the vast Alhambra-like hall of the knights.

For the last time Amfortis is borne in, and the brotherhood of the Grail form the procession bearing the sacred relics, which are deposited before him.

The king, in great agony and despair, bewails the death of his father and his own backsliding. With failing but desperate energy he harangues the assembled knights, and, tottering forward, beseeches them to free him from his misery and sin-stained life, and thrust their swords deep into his wounded side. At this moment Gurnemanz, accompanied by Parsifal and Kundry, enter. Parsifal steps forward with the sacred spear, now at length to be restored to the knights. He touches the side of Amfortis, the wound is healed, and as he raises the spear on high its point is seen, glowing with the crimson glory of the Grail. Then stepping up to the shrine, Parsifal takes the crystal cup, the dark blood glows bright crimson as he holds it on high, and at that moment, whilst all fall on their

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knees, and celestial music ("Drink ye all of this") floats in the upper air, Kundry falls back dying, her eyes fixed on the blessed Grail. A white dove descends and hovers for a moment, poised in mid-air above the glowing cup. A soft chorus of angels seems to die away in the clouds beyond the golden dome—

"Marvellous mercy!
Victorious Saviour!"

* * * * *

Words can add nothing to the completeness of the drama, and no words can give any idea of the splendour and complexity of that sound ocean upon which the drama floats from beginning to end.

The enemies of the Grail are destroyed or subdued, the wound they have inflicted is healed, the prey they claimed is rescued; the pure and blameless Parsifal becomes the consecrated head of the holy brotherhood, and the beatific vision of God's eternal love and Real Presence is restored to the Knights of the Sangrail.

* * * * *

When I came out of the theatre at the end of the third and last act, it was ten o'clock.

The wind was stirring in the fir trees, the stars gleamed out fitfully through a sky, across which the clouds were hurrying wildly, but the moon rose low and large beyond the shadowy hills, and bathed the misty valleys with a mild and golden radiance as of some celestial dawn.

Bayreuth,
July, 1883.

H. R. HAWEIS.

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THE MARBLE MOUNTAINS.

PERHAPS there are no mountains in the world more fascinating to the imagination than the grand and massive range which, following the coast-line of Tuscany, is reflected with almost magical clearness in the blue waters of the bay of Spezia. They are geographically, geologically, and historically distinct from the branch of the Apennines enclosing the opposite side of the vast bay, and have been known by a variety of names since the dim ages when an ancient people, the Apuan Ligurians, built their huts upon the sheltered coast beneath the shadow of the Pizzo d'Uccello, and either took their name from, or gave one to, these Apuan Alps.

They are now locally distinguished as the "Panie" range, and from time immemorial have been called the mountains of Luni, from the old port of semi-circular form whence the marble from their quarries for many centuries was shipped for Ostia. For these wonderful mountains are formed of marble from base to summit, resting on a framework of chalk-banks, and primitive excavations show that the quarries were worked at a very remote date. Although Pliny, in the thirty-sixth book of his natural history, speaks of the marble of Luni as having recently been discovered, traces of its existence in far earlier days have been brought to light. The capital found in the ruins of the Etruscan Luni, which makes mention of Claudius Metellus when he came to fight the valorous Apuans, and the sarcophagus discovered in the ancient Tarquinia, prove that the marble was used when the Romans first introduced their arts into the conquered land. The golden period for the quarries seems to have been in the reigns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, when the marble shipped from Luni ascended the Tiber and was deposited on the spot where now stands the Basilica of St. Paul's at Rome. In later times it was actively employed in the erection of many sacred edifices, at Pisa, at Modena, Assisi, Orvieto, Lucca, indeed in most of the grand cathedrals reared by nameless monks in the eleventh and two following centuries. Those were the days of bitter strife between the Guelphs and Ghebelines, and when the horrors of civil war ceased, it is said that the black and white marbles used in the adornment of the magnificent buildings at Pisa, commemorated the reconciliation of the Neri and Bianchi faction.

But little notice is found of the quarries until a few centuries later, when art woke again in the country of Michael Angelo, and

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the Apuan marbles, now commonly called Carrara, were substituted for those of classic fame. They are thought to possess greater fineness of grain and facility for working than the Parian Pentelican, or Hymettian marbles, and from the sharpness of the brittle edge, the finest curves are executed upon them with wonderful precision. The size of the monoliths also, particularly those produced from the ancient quarry of Polvaccio, add another value to the marbles of Luni. Under the microscope they are found to be limestone changed into saccharoid marble, consisting of crystalline grains of calcite, and still showing the characteristic cleavage of that mineral, but from a mixture of heterogeneous substances they are often speckled, veined, or spotted. The Brecciati is a conglomeration of minute stones, the white Bardiglio has dark blue veins, whilst the flowered Bardiglio is so richly hued with such a strange intricacy of pattern, that it is peculiarly adapted for varied ornamentation.

The different varieties are not arranged in layers, but are covered and divided by a light sandy coating, and a kind of schist, called "madre," indicates the "Marmo Statuario," the most valuable of the Carrara marbles. This kind alone has several different tints. Sometimes it is of dazzling whiteness, at others a pearl-grey; but the loveliest and most rare is the flesh-colour of the Crestola. Like the Parian of old, the Biancho Chiaro may well be called "splendid, shining, soft, and delicate;" and it exhibits a curious antipathy to any impurity resting upon its polished surface; a drop of red wine changes it to violet, quicklime tinges it with blood, and chestnut juice turns it black; yet from this delicate and sensitive marble have been produced the most colossal monuments, the loftiest columns, and the most sumptuous vestibules.

No doubt its value depends greatly on freedom from speck or blemish, for a livid spot or vein appearing beneath the chisel of the artist may completely mar his work. In the memoirs of Dupré, it is stated, that whilst sculpturing the "Giotto" of the Uffizi for the Grand Duchess Maria Antoinetta, he found a hair which split the marble through, and forced him to make a reproduction of his work. We find that numberless references are made by ancient writers to the quarries of Luni. Strabo mentions that most of the works of art in Rome of his day were wrought in their marbles, and Ovid, Pliny, and Juvenal feared that the continued struggle of man with nature on the steep hillsides, would in time destroy the Apuan Alps. Twenty centuries of labour, however, have changed but little the configuration of these massive mountains, from whose 400 different quarries about 100,000 tons of marble are yearly taken out, and exported to every country in Europe and America. Many thousands of workmen find employment here, and the echoes of their titanic labour —the blasting—the shock of stupendous blocks of marble hurled

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down from dizzy heights—is reverberated far along the Apuan chain. One of the largest quarries is on the Monte Sacro, famed for producing monoliths of a vast size, and at the foot of the mountain rises the little river Carrione, which washes, with its pale and glistening waters, the town of Carrara. In this busy region we are reminded of the old Mediterranean motto, "By Hammer and Hand all Arts do stand;" it appears to be the very home of sculpture, and many a serene work of art has gone forth to far-off lands from its workshops under the hill—silent memorials, not only of Italian genius, but of their fair Italian birth-place.

For it is not merely the actual marble, beautiful and varied as it is, that seems to transform these dazzling mountains into an enchanted land; they are haunted by memories of art and of those great names which have been writ upon the walls of time; indeed their records would form a lengthened chapter in the history of Italian sculpture, and the sympathy between them is so deep that nature here seems blended with art, and art has associated itself with nature, for since those long by-gone years when, in the land of Phidias, art died away, most of the sculptured master-pieces of the world have been given to us in the marble of Carrara. What a profusion of treasures and illustrious names are inseparably connected with it! What dreams of beauty it recalls! from the "David," the magnificent colossus of Michael Angelo Buonoroti[1] to the "Wellington" of Canova. And many another name, famous in the history of the sculptor's art, meets us on the threshold of these quarries; Finelli, Bartolini, Tenerani, Ranck, Dupré, have all transmuted the marble of Carrara into living works of art. It is impossible to gaze upon the fresh-hewn peaks and gorges without recalling some of the grand works of the past, whose beauty is the splendid heritage of the present, amongst countless artistic gems we know that the Hours, Graces, Charity, Psyche, Fame, have assumed their divine forms in the Apuan marble, which, in the hands of Michael Angelo, appears to have had the pliancy of clay and lent itself to fashion not only the world-renowned sculptures but humble instruments of sound, the spinet, guitar, and violin. We remember that he laboured in the quarries near us, working like the poorest artisan until fame came gradually to end his toil, and tradition tells us how unwillingly he exchanged the chisel for the brush when, by command of Julius II., he undertook the decorations in fresco upon the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. In an original letter preserved in the British Museum is recorded his sufferings from the labour of climbing the hills and from the dishonesty of his fellow-workmen.

More than three centuries have passed away since Michael Angelo placed the laurel-wreath upon his brow, but the spell of

[1] The correct *surname* of Michael Angelo.

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his genius which gave to his works such sublime simplicity, such glorious truth, seems to linger around these magic mountains still.

The road coming from the Pisan pine woods winds amongst the fallen blocks lying here and there upon the gradual slope formed by the *débris* of the wasting marble far below the lofty and picturesque outlines of the Pizzo d'Uccello which terminates the huge chain to the south-east; in the centre of the face of its double peak there is an oval cavern of triangular shape, and no more singular coign of vantage can be found than this dim haunt framed between walls of marble, from which can be seen the whole extent of the bay of Spezia stretching away to southwards, and blue as far as the eye can reach. There is no fairer scene on the Mediterranean shores than this noble bay surrounded by an almost tropical luxuriance of vegetation; by chestnut, dusky olive, and pale lemon groves; by fields bright with anemones and sweet narcissus, and in the delicious atmosphere of this southern land every object is clear, the peaks and buttresses, sharp outlines and snowy crests of the solemn Apennines, broken and intersected by deep valleys; the far-off islands set in a sapphire sea; whilst nearer at hand the grand masses of the marble mountains are thrown up for thousands of feet in startling contrast with the deep blue sky. Upon their gleaming precipices no fern, or lichen, or blade of grass can find a resting-place, and in sunshine or moonlight they remain the most striking feature in the world of verdure around. How magnificent is their splendour as they catch the glowing crimson of the West! How grand and weird they rise in the deep purple of the "Earth's cool shadow" which we call "Night!"

M. PLUMMER.

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TIME.

DECEMBER, 1883.

A REAL QUEEN.

CHAPTER IX.

GITANA. Why dost thou weep, fair lady?
ISABEL. For my lord,
My dear, dead love, whose death made dark the sun!
See, I would give my wealth, my soul, my all,
My more than all, to see him live, and say,
'Twas but a dream I died in: here am I.
GITANA. No more than this—to make a dead man rise?
The Witch of Endor did as much: and thrice
The secrets of her craft are known to me.
I'll use my spell for pity, not for gain.
Come forth, Count Arcos!
ISABEL. Hold: in mercy hold!
Tears shed for love must not be shed for naught—
And should he come——
GITANA. Enough: I understand.
Tears wept for one, another's lips must dry.

AFTER so dark a night, in so many senses, it was natural that the sun, who has no sort of sympathy for what goes on beneath him, should rise with unusual brilliancy. Rosamond sprang from her bed early, with a delicious sense that the weight of her unsought crown had at last fallen from her, that she was released from the spell under which she had been living, and was free to resume the life she had always longed for—even to begin again from her fifteenth birthday, so far as that might be. It was not that she had become false to the good resolutions she had been making for her people's sake—it was that Apahu had ceased to be real to her, in the fresh birth of an English morning.

Her first action was to kneel down beside the bed of Sophy, who still slept—who, indeed, had never been robbed of a night's rest

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either by joy or sorrow—and to sing a song of thanks without words. She knew how she would have felt had Sophy been lost out of life and then, after many years, had risen from the grave: and what she herself would have felt, she believed that Sophy dreamed. And then, throwing open the window, she let her plans of life make themselves all over again.

She would never marry. She remembered what Oswald Hargrave had said to her when she was a child, and even in Apahu she had come to comprehend his meaning. Indeed, where in the world are such meanings not to be learned? And if he had been ever so much loyal as to have known or cared whether her sister was alive or dead, she might easily have been tempted to be as false to her childish vow of singleness, as to her vow of self devotion to her people made in the belief that her people had become her all. But even Oswald, the only man she had ever met whom insight bade her trust wholly, had, by showing how quickly forgetful the staunchest of all men was, shown her what all other men must be. It was not that he had not recognised Rosamond herself in the Queen of Apahu: that was nothing: even Sophy had not guessed at what lay beneath her disguise. But not even to know, not to speak of caring, what had become of Sophy—that was treason: that left no name for the nature of a Rackstraw, or a Horace Derwent, or for any other example of civilised man. Had not her heart been overflowing with joy at finding Sophy herself alive, and well, and with her once again, and all her own, and maybe if the sun had shone less brightly, she would have let her heart turn bitter. As things were, she contented herself with a royal and lofty scorn for Oswald's sex, and was far too much assured of her contempt for it to make vows against a temptation by which she could never, by the remotest possibility, be assailed. In her narrow world there had never been any man, who could be called such, save Oswald: and there was no place in it for a worse, the best having been expelled.

Why, he had not recognised Sophy any more than he had recognised Rosamond; Sophy had found concealment as easy a game to play as she. Of course, he, as their neighbour at Windgates, would now have to know who the ladies at Crossmarsh were. And yet—it suddenly struck her—why should he, why should any living creature know? It would be hideous to have to play the part of a nine days' wonder, as the heroine of some newspaper romance about the conversion of a missing heiress into a barbarian queen, who had returned home after years of adventure such as none of imagination inferior to a professed journalist's would dare to conceive. She shrank, as any woman would, from feeling herself a heroine of such sort even for a single hour. And then Sophy would have to be dragged into the exposure, with her own concealment to account for—a concealment which no human being would ever be able to comprehend. All this would be saved if

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they remained as they were—Sophy and Rosamond to one another, but to all the parish Madame Miranda and Miss Grey. Crossmarsh would become used to them in time, and the wider world would soon forget even the tradition that there had ever been a foreign woman calling herself Queen of a country that would never be heard of again.

For occupation, home and rest looked ample to satisfy one who had known neither for many years; and who does not fancy that what she feels now she will feel for ever—nay, that all the world will feel for ever what she feels now? So, single and at rest, she and Sophy would go on living at Crossmarsh, which was at any rate full and large enough to give two pairs of hands as much work as they could do. It was not idleness that Rosamond wanted, but to work out her life in peace, and she had at any rate studied the art of government enough to have learned that there is work enough to be done anywhere and everywhere.

She knew when Sophy woke even sooner than Sophy herself; and the first sight upon which the opening eyes fell was Rosamond.

"Wake up, Sophy!" cried she; "and wish me many happy returns of the day! At last I am fifteen!"

"Fifteen!" exclaimed Sophy, starting up in bed, and feeling herself compelled to face a new day in company with one whom her inmost heart could not receive as the sister who had died while she was a child; "why—you were fifteen when——"

"Never, Sophy. Nothing has ever happened since I—since I was ill. That was yesterday. I am well, and fifteen, to-day."

Meanwhile, Horace Derwent, utterly baffled by his reception of yesterday, had spent his evening in a long ramble along the coast, in order to think matters out by the help of hard exercise: for he was little used to sit thinking, and had to balance the action of his brain with that of his limbs. And the more he thought the less could he believe in Senhora Miranda's good faith, even though he could not invent any shadow of reason for her continued concealment of his unfortunate brother from one who so clearly meant him well. But there is no need to narrate in detail the inevitable mazes in which the mind of one was compelled to wander who had no better light than Silver Moldwarp's for a guide. And then he was angry with himself for having been startled out of needful persistence by recognising Sophy in the Senhora's companion; and still more angry in that one who had so plainly shown her contempt or aversion for him, or both, should still have had the power so completely to overthrow his presence of mind.

Only one thing remained certain and clear—that Senhora Miranda must be compelled to give up her knowledge, that his half-brother must forthwith be restored to his inheritance, that Sophy must be blotted out of his life, and that he must hence-

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forth devote himself to the work of holding up his mother and his sisters above the ruin that justice would cause by the strength of his own arm. Of one thing he did not as yet dare to think: for the bravest and honestest of men was bound to be a very coward of cowards before the prospect of having to announce to his mother the catastrophe that was about to befall. No man believes in the power of a woman to sacrifice those who are dear to her for the sake of justice to an enemy: and doubtless, in Mrs. Derwent's case, her son's disbelief in the capacities of her sex were not unjustified. Even he had had to thrust himself out of temptation, though a man. At length his thoughts succeeded in tiring limbs that were untirable while left to themselves, and brought him to the condition in which To-morrow appears in a hopeful light, simply because it is not To-day. So he returned to his bed at the "Feathers" at an hour that would be considered late in Crossmarsh, and in a humour of too little desire for the company of Moldwarp to make enquiry whether the latter was in the parlour, or in bed, or where.

When next morning came, with its fresher if not better counsel, it seemed of but small moment to him that Silver Moldwarp was still missing: and to others, who knew not that this elderly gentleman in black clothes had been in the neighbourhood of the haunted chamber, of no moment at all. Now that Horace was in direct treaty with the lady who, a mystery herself, appeared to hold the key of all lesser mysteries, his original guide could be dispensed with, and would doubtless take good care to turn up in time for his reward. Had he cared to make enquiries, he might perhaps have heard news: as things were, he saw nobody but the country maid who brought him his dish of eggs and bacon, and then set off at an hour, fixed rather by impatience than by etiquette, for a second and final interview with Senhora Miranda.

"She knows where Lawrence Derwent is: and both of them trust me, or they would not have trusted me with the will. I forgot I was dealing with a woman, who doesn't know how to be straightforward, and must needs make a secret of everything, so that she may be important, and let it out piecemeal," thought the young man, whom everything was combining to confirm in his misogyny. "If she had anything to hide, she would have let it out long ago—one may be sure."

With such venerable traditions he sought to transform himself into a philosopher, and labeled and disposed of one woman so that he might not be troubled in his social ruin by vain thoughts of another—rather than call Sophy a coquette, he laid other offences upon the shoulders of any of her sisters in Eve who might happen to be nearest to hand. Nay, he believed that he had steeled himself, by dint of common sense, strength of resolution, and half eagerness for the hard battle of life in which he must presently engage, that he honestly felt capable of meeting

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Sophy herself face to face without again losing one iota of the most dignified self-possession. In returning to the house that held her, he was no mere moth stupidly fluttering about a fatal flame, but one inspired by the conviction that one may learn from experience how to avoid being burned again. A burnt child, as they say, fears the fire: a philosopher is not, or ought not to be, a slave to childish fears.

Indeed, he was so confident of himself that he even looked forward to meeting her for the last time, solely, of course, in order that she might plainly see how mistaken she was if she fancied that any conduct of hers had so much as singed a single feather of his wings. He would confine himself solely to his all important business with Senhora Miranda, and so, it may be, have the triumph of wounding a coquette's vanity: for love delights to give pain, and to share all things it feels; and somehow the very brightness of the sunshine, as it were, hardened him: for it shone so apart from all things that went on upon earth, and upbraided his life with all that other sunshine that might so well have been but for a villain and a flirt—and but for the flirt the most of all.

For exactly one thing he was not prepared: and that was in the midst of his thoughts of her to come face to face with her of whom his thoughts were. He had not expected to see Sophy till he had entered the house: and he met her, all on a sudden, in the middle of the drive.

Had he been prepared for this most simple of chances, he would have raised his hat and passed on, so as not to press his company upon a girl who had so plainly shown that she wished to have nothing to do with one whom she had no doubt learned from her new friends to be a ruined pretender to a fortune that was none of his own. Indeed, he had already felt—for he had thought of all things save this meeting with her alone—that had she ever promised to be his wife, he would have had to have given her her release, and that he could never have kept her even if he had had the evil fortune to win her. But, unprepared, he wavered: and it was for Sophy to vindicate her own dignity by not showing a sign of having so much as noticed his neglect of her in her time of trouble.

"Good morning, Mr. Derwent," she said, with an effort after easy indifference that made her seem almost cordial. She even forced herself to hold out her hand, even at the risk of his finding it too warm or else too cold. "If you wish to see Madame, you will find her at home."

"Thanks, Miss Fane. Yes: I have business with Madame." He did not notice anything about her hand, as he held it lightly for a moment: and indeed if it had actually trembled, he would have thought his own to blame. "It—it is a long time since we met, Miss Fane."

Of all things this was the last he meant to say: and so he said

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it, according to the law of such things. They were standing hard by that very greenhouse where, in old times, Oswald Hargrave had asked Rosamond to wait for him, and had tried, as it seemed in vain, to give her first lesson in love to one who in some ten years had never received another. Thus, seeing that this greenhouse (as may be remembered) had been Sophy's main watch-tower, they were in the worst possible position for confidential talk: for if stone walls have ears, glass ones have ears also, and eyes as well. But nothing was more remote from their intention than talk in confidence: and Sophy's recollections of her childhood were as faint and dim as her sister's were strong even to passion.

"Is it?" asked Sophy.

"Well, perhaps not," said Horace. "A good many months isn't much for people not to meet in London, I know—especially as it will have to be a good many years now."

"Yes," she answered. "I dare say it will."

"Yes—I am not likely to trouble my friends any further, after to-day."

"I am sure of that," said Sophy trying to be sarcastic and cool. "I should say there is nobody in the world who is less likely to be troublesome to his friends."

"To trouble my acquaintances then. But I should have thought you the last to give me so good a character, Miss Fane. I have it on my conscience that I ought to ask your forgiveness for having been something more than troublesome."

He knew he was not speaking as he had planned: but her coolness stung him: and for that matter it now seemed better to part from her in a quarrel than simply to lift his hat and pass on.

Perhaps he felt, though he certainly could not see, that she also was growing a little angry: for she had meant to make some sort of point against him, as she would hardly have done had she been honestly careless, or as clear in her conscience as he felt himself to be in his own. "I really," said she, a little sharply, "cannot guess what you mean."

"Then all I can say is," he broke out plainly, "you must be forgiveness itself—as for me, I declare that I can't look back upon the way I tried to force myself upon you in the midst of all your trouble without shame. Only I thought I might be able to help you—and I could not know then, as I know now, that I had neither the right nor the means to help the weakest of all creatures in the world. I never meant to say a single word—but it is said now. I think, if you knew of my position from your friend, the Senhora, you might have let me know it at once, and saved me a great deal of pain. One does not generally go out of one's way to wound those for whom one cares nothing—at least a man would not, whatever a woman might do. There—it has said itself, and it certainly will not be said again. I ought to be thinking of my poor brother, and of him alone. Perhaps *you* can

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tell me where I may find him—or must you wait in everything upon the will and pleasure of your Queen?"

"But it must be said—everything must be said!" exclaimed Sophy, with a sudden change of tone, and an eagerness that she might have caught from Rosamond. "What do you mean by forcing yourself upon me? You must tell me—you must indeed."

"Why 'must'? What is the use of another word, when I never meant to say a single one? However, if you *must* know—well then, a man who finds himself denied and unanswered may go on persevering up to a certain point: so long as he cannot guess why. But when he finds that, unknown to himself though not unknown to others, he had lost a fortune, he can only put the two things together and—beg pardon for his troublesome folly, as I do now."

"And what, then, are his friends to think, when he seizes every chance of flattering their weaknesses while he thinks them rich, and quietly throws them over as soon as he finds *them* ruined and poor: yes, who is so afraid of their wanting his help, I suppose, that he flies even from their deathbeds as if it were the plague? . . . . . There, Mr. Derwent: we have both said our say now—"

"Good God! *I* fly from *you*—and because I was afraid of your being poor? Have you forgotten how I tried to see you day after day, and was always denied—how I wrote to you (and it shames me now to think of how and what I wrote) and was never answered: how——"

"You *did* write? You *did* call?"

"How can you ask me—when you know it as well as I?"

"But I do not know it—I never knew it—it must have been kept from me: though Heaven knows how, or why, or by whom. Oh, what have I thought—what have I done?"

"You never denied yourself to me? You thought me some miserable fortune hunter, who found himself disappointed, and was not even civil enough to let himself slide away by decent degrees? Sophy *you* thought this of *me!*"

Surely she was sharp enough to have retorted, "And what better did *you* think of *me?*" But she had no heart left for retorts: that part of her was wholly engaged in the new birth of an old dream of hope from its grave under the warmth of looks and tones that it welcomed almost too much to understand. So she only answered,

"Is it possible for friends to forgive friends?"

And while her heart was thus engaged, all her wits were at work upon what that letter had said, and whither it had gone. Little indeed had she guessed, when she went out that morning, what its sunshine was to bring! After all, the sun is not always cold-blooded, and can laugh with his subjects now and then.

"They can try," said Horace, magnanimous with love, and forget-

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ting that if mistrust was treason, he was himself no less to blame. "Sophy—my darling—you know what I would have said if this strange cloud had not come between us, ages ago. I was going to tell you all I felt that very night when you were to have come to our house, and never came. Sophy—whatever you would have said then, or after, say it now!"

Then Sophy also learned what it means to wake up suddenly and to feel as though all past sorrows are a dream. There was no need to stand out for the formalities of wooing: for she felt herself alone in the world, despite those new found ties which meant so little to one who had lived without them until she had forgotten them, and indeed the most gracious and generous honesty was only the due of one who had waited under so dark a cloud so long. . . . . And so the word she would have said before she disbelieved was whispered and sealed, despite the blundering of Oswald, the plotting of Rackstraw: in short, despite all the world of men and women they knew.

Indeed it had needed but a look and a word to clear the air between them, and it was a little wonderful that the process had taken at any rate so many words. Had they not been true lovers, after their manner, they might doubtless still have found many a matter left that needed removing before the air could be considered wholly clear. How, for example, could Sophy's presence at home and in London be without her knowledge so often and so systematically denied? How could he have written a letter that had failed to reach her hands? But though reason be helpless all at once to exorcise such doubts, reason, happily, was wholly absent, as she should always be when two lovers have found one another again, and stand hand-locked in a garden of sunshine. Let ruin come now, and welcome—

But no; less welcome now than ever. Ruin had been only welcome when it meant escape from self—not now. Horace, though it was he who loved the better, as one needs must out of every two, was the first to recover consciousness that the cloud had been no dream, and hung over them still.

"My darling," he said, "don't forget that you are giving yourself to a poor man: who can call nothing but you his own——"

"Did I ever think of you as a rich one?" asked she.

They were as close together as could be: for they were out of sight of both house and road, and there was nobody to watch from the greenhouse now.

"But you know that everything I have seemed to have, I have been robbing from another man—or rather has been robbed for me by others: and must all be given back again. And I have others to work for—not only you. For I cannot suppose that my brother, since he has been so treated, will show much mercy to me and mine: and, for myself, I would ask for none. There is only one thing for me, dearest—I must go abroad. The colonies

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were made for men like me,—so that scoundrel Rackstraw has told me and proved to me over and over again. I must work my way up—can you wait for me, Sophy? With you to work for, waiting can't be long."

More than half his speech had been wasted. That his brother had been ill-used, and that Rackstraw could be called a scoundrel, were things too dead against all her beliefs to be understood all at once, though since he said them, they must needs be true—she could not believe and trust him enough to make up for having mistrusted him so long. But what was not wasted was as clear as day.

"No—I will not wait," said she. "I am beginning to understand things—not much, but enough for me. You must not have all the work, and all the trouble, while I have none. Oh, Horace, you must not ask me to stay waiting for you here—waiting, and wondering, and perhaps not hearing from you, like—like I did before——"

"What!" he cried, looking down into her eyes with joyful wonder: "You will come—with me?"

"Why not? I could help you—I should not keep you down——"

"Darling! But to the other end of the world——"

"What is to keep me here? Yes, and farther still."

So spake she who but a few hours ago had been full of longing to place herself indeed at the other end of the world, but in other company. Heart was speaking to heart now, so that their words were not loud. But their whisper was loud enough at least to reach the ears of Rosamond, as she stood and listened behind the glass and under the vine.

It was not a case in which one calmly waits to decide whether listening is right or wrong. At first the words she heard were such as were open for all the world to hear. The line when they ceased to be such was far from being clearly drawn; and, when that line was passed, she could not lose the rest without stopping her ears, or letting Sophy and Horace know that they were being overheard. Indeed she was not conscious of being a listener, but of a sudden blow.

She was dead then: after all.

Why had she ever come back from her grave? The folly of ghosts who come back to trouble the living was at last being borne sharply into her mind. Only yesterday Sophy had regained her lost and buried sister: only to-day Sophy was eager to leave her, "for the other end of the world, and further still." Rosamond had come back, with her heart on fire, only to find all things void and barren, and herself forgotten, not wanted, and in the way.

And so it was for a common love-pique, and out of no instinctive affection for the sister who had become a friend, that Sophy had been so anxious to escape to Apahu. And so this was the

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end of the poor Queen's fantastic plans of throwing her crown away, and of living, with Sophy, in such manner as wise maidens will who have discovered in time the vanity of love, marriage, foreign friendships, and of all things but nature, duty, and home.

She had been wasting all her joy upon a heart that never knew her, and turned from her without a thought as soon as some young man came by. I know that love is the only passion which poetry, and prose too, permits to set hearts breaking; and that for a sister to break her heart over a sister is out of all rule. Yet I doubt if many a man has gone nearer to breaking his heart over a mistress than Rosamond went to breaking hers over Sophy, just then. Think how it would be if you, having been dead, were suddenly to come back, full of passionate life, to find yourself conventionally mourned indeed, but—in the way! If you were wise, you would straightway crawl back to your grave. And who among us could count upon welcome to the midst of all the new growths and the new interests that had sprung up since he was dead, and that he would only come back to disturb?

That is a thought solemn enough to comfort the dead (if they could feel) in their graves. But it brought anything but comfort to Rosamond, as she watched her sister and her sister's lover move slowly towards the house, and with none but themselves in their minds. Her uncle was dead—well, that was a disappointment rather than a sorrow, and he had always been one of those men to whose loss a younger generation soon grows reconciled. The friend of their household had forgotten them: but to accept this she had been aided by pride. She had found her home lost and broken, and herself forgotten: and this had been hard at first to bear, but it could be borne. But Sophy was not only Sophy, but had come to unite in herself all that was left of friends, family, and home, all in one. And while Sophy was thus all in all to her, she was no more to Sophy than if she had never been born.

It was a tragedy; and none the less for its being wanting in all the elements whereof tragedies are made. She was young, healthy, rich, a crowned Queen, who had lost no lover, and was free to do with her life well nigh what she pleased; neither had she sinned against any, nor any against her. Why should she wish to stand between two true lovers? She did not wish it; she wished nothing. She could only feel dead in the midst of others' lives, and infinitely, hopelessly alone. If only a dog could have let her see that he remembered her, she could have cried. It would have been more bearable had she felt less full of life and strength, or compelled, like her sister, to fight the world. And if other real kings and queens ever feel in this like this one, then it is the beggars who have the best of the world.

She had not the heart to follow the lovers towards the house which had once again ceased to be home—or indeed, for anything.

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So she crossed the lawn, and passed through the side door in the garden wall to the path along the cliff's edge whence she was supposed to have thrown herself; it had been an old haunt of hers when she was alive.

PART IV.

CHAPTER I.

E'en till the gate shall close,
Thus shall it be—
Waking, to seek and lose,
Sleeping, to see.

THE last sight and the last sound which made Oswald Hargrave conscious of life, as he fell forward upon that same cliff path into which Rosamond had turned for solitude (as if loneliness can be made more lonely) was the sight of Silver Moldwarp whirling through the air out of this world, and the evil echo of his fall into another. The next experiences of life were such as are not to be told, for they were painted by fever. So wildly impossible were they that at last he could have sworn, had he the strength, that he was lying upon a bed of spikes in the midst of a flock of wolves, while Rosamond herself, looking and speaking as he had last seen her and heard her ages ago, was by his bedside guarding him. Whatever he might now and then doubt as to the truth of the rest, she remained always real. He could hear her very voice: nay, though less often and less clearly, he could feel her very eyes. Nor did she ever change into any other creature, as did the wolves. So far from this, he once or twice found strength to doubt whether he had not really found her at last, and feebly tried to decide whether he, living, had found her dead, or whether, being dead, he had found her alive.

At last, however, there came the time when other powers than his own had to decide whether he should actually live or die: and they decided for his living. A long, deep darkness seemed to roll away from him, and left him with a body miserably weak, but with a mind strangely calm and clear. When this happened, he found himself stretched out in bed, in a room at once familiar and strange, and with a general consciousness of having been terribly ill. He tried to rise, but had not strength enough to bring himself to his elbow. The effort only brought back the memory of how it was he had been brought to this pass, and the knowledge of where he must be lying—and, alas, the knowledge also of how he had brought himself face to face with Lawrence Derwent at last, only to let the ruffian slip through his hands. The memory of what he had last seen and heard of Moldwarp made him shudder: but at that of his own blundering failure he groaned aloud.

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The slight rustle of a dress seemed to answer him. Then, clear though his brain had grown, a desperate hope, born of past fever, came to him.

"*Is* it Rosamond?" he asked in the ghost of a voice—so much a ghost that he scarcely knew whether he spoke or no.

"Do you know me?" came an eager and anxious answer, close to his ear.

The desperate hope vanished. "You are Sophy Fane," he sighed, "unless I am dreaming still." He was so weak that he could hardly keep from weeping over his vanished vision, as if he were a child who has dreamed of having grasped the moon, and wakes with clenched but empty hands.

"Thank God!" exclaimed Sophy. "The doctor was right—the danger is gone! But how *did* it happen? How came *you* to be found lying on the cliff—But I mustn't ask questions now——"

"And——"

"Hush! Nor must you."

Indeed, what between sleep and weakness, and the first passive indifference of one who has just returned from a journey to death's door, Oswald took four-and-twenty hours to learn that it was over four weeks since he had been discovered lying stretched upon his face, all unconscious, bleeding to death, and so near the cliff's edge that it was wonderful he had not rolled over and been swept away by the tide. Who had found him there? But at this question Sophy only shook her head, and answered that it was nobody in particular—indeed, that she had forgotten and would have to enquire. Who had shot him? asked she in turn. But, not having yet settled in his own mind how, when, how far, or to whom he should report this portion of his search for Lawrence Derwent, he answered, somewhat in her fashion, by turning round, and affecting a sudden sleep that very soon became a reality. Clearly the murderer of Silver Moldwarp, and his own half murderer, was not arrested, or Sophy's question would have been put in a different form.

By the time another long bout of sleep and food was over, he had seen both his doctors, one of Crossmarsh and the other from Laxham, as well as Sophy once more, and was in better possession of matters, so far as they were known, and as he could be told them. He was truly at the house that was now Senhora Miranda's, whither he had at once been carried, and where he had been nursed back into life again. It had been a formidable wound, a bullet having entered the chest, and having spared life as if by a miracle: as things were, there was still fear of permanent lung mischief, and of his being never wholly the same man again. No mention was made of Moldwarp, whom there was nobody to miss, and no reason for missing: and Oswald, preferring to keep his own counsel, at any rate till he should have seen Horace Der-

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went, readily fell in with the general impression that his assailant must have been a burglar whose work had been disturbed. What was more likely than burglary upon a house just occupied by two unprotected ladies from London where thousands of people knew that one of them was a very queen of ruby mines? Nobody had been taken: indeed the police were altogether without a clue.

There was little more to be spoken of, so far as concerned Oswald. His only interest in the disposition of the Derwent property depended upon its enabling him to meet the rightful heir, and this seemed now to have become more impossible than ever. The assassin had no doubt fled the country by this time, and Oswald, dogged as he had proved himself, shrank from the prospect of beginning to search the habitable world all over again from the beginning. However, his strength increased as the days went on, though slowly, and, as he gathered, much more slowly than his doctors expected. Had he not been healthy in himself, he must have died: but, in truth, he was in no great haste to live, as having nothing left to live for—unless he might discover something new. Loyalty, at least, had proved but a poor career.

Thus fortune had at last given him plenty of time for reflection on the use he had made of the ten best years of his manhood, and for finding out, if he were able, that his loyalty had stagnated into something sadly hollow and empty—bitterly like dogged revenge, and the vanity which will be false to the trust that life is rather than confess to defeat or folly. Suppose it had been Rosamond herself instead of Sophy who sat by him through his fever—would he have known her on waking? Would he not sooner have seen his enemy, so that he might find a better chance on a fairer field? "No," thought he, wearily, "I love Rosamond no more." And he knew not whether he were the more ashamed for his unfaith, or for his life thrown away upon a barren craze. Rosamond had been right—even from a lover ten years is too long to stay away.

He knew he was in Senhora Miranda's house, and yet the mistress had never yet paid him a visit—nay, though she doubtless made all courteous enquiries after the recovery of her guest, no such message was ever brought to him. Even without such seeming neglect, she would have been much in his thoughts: by reason of it, she was in them all the more. But, for that matter, he had been struck down even while his thoughts had become filled with her, and the bullet of his enemy had thus served to emphasise the influence over him, of a woman who was more of a mystery than even her sex had made her. Between the dead child and the beautiful living woman, all the more fascinating for the possible danger to which her spells might lead, the battle was wholly unfair. No thought of love for one of whom he knew nothing but that she was strange, and beautiful, and likely enough to be unfit for any true man's love, entered his mind. But then

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love, alone among passions, has ten thousand names. It is harder to say when love begins than when it ends: and even that is hard enough to say.

Sophy, however, came and sat with him two or three times a day: the Crossmarsh surgeon made a daily visit: the Rectory was attentive: and neighbourly visits from Windgate and Laxham were not rare, not to speak of calls of enquiry from Mr. Crowe, and other fathers and mothers of the two villages. So, as he advanced in convalescence, he did not want for company, and this made it all the stranger, at least to him, that there was no gossip worth mentioning about Senhora Miranda. Instead of being a wonder of the country side, she seemed ignored. Of course the reason was plain enough—that she held a place in his mind which forbade speech of her. He was too proud, or too shamefaced, to seem curious about one of whom he could scarce reconcile his honour to be thinking at all: and more—though he dared not own it, he was afraid to hear. None knew better than he how a foreign woman, who was either heathen, papist, or worse, and far more beautiful than she had any business to be, would fare in village talk: and it was only too likely that such talk might in her case be only too true. At last it seemed that his visitors' very silence came from fear of giving offence to a neighbour who might be the lady's friend as well as guest: and so it came to pass that his silence created theirs.

Besides, there was everything else to talk about—not forgetting, when Mr. Crowe happened to call during Miss Grey's absence, the fatal mysteries of the haunted room. Despite the conspiracy of silence, the great village story had spread and grown beyond the recognition, though not beyond the belief, of its first inventors, who had almost daily to lay on fresh colours in order not to lose the prestige of original authority. Even had Oswald cared to set things straight, it would have been out of the question now—Crossmarsh would have gone to the stake as one man rather than give up the faith that it was the devil's own playground.

At last it came out that a Windgates man had seen, with his own eyes, a dark shape with horns like an ox fly thrice, on that fatal night, round Windgates steeple with a struggling body in its claws.

This was too much for patriotism. "'Twould take a Windgates man," said Mr. Crowe, with scorn, "to think an owl and a mouse for a man and—*him*. For 'twas round Crossmarsh steeple: and 'twas four times—not three. And harns like an ox's! Why, they was harns like a bull's!"

"And what are your own plans?" he at last asked Sophy. "Are you still bent upon that voyage——"

"What voyage?" asked she, with an air of wonderful innocence, though she knew what he meant, perfectly well.

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"You mustn't expect me to remember the name of a country of which nobody ever heard. But I can't forget what you told me, before——"

"You mean Apahu? Oh, that idea is given up long ago. Of course it must be, now."

"Then I am glad of it with all my soul. You have taken a weight off my mind! But why *of course*? I thought your friend's will was law."

"Ah, but it was never her will, Oswald," said Sophy. "It was mine. But—has nobody told you? Haven't you heard?"

"Heard what?" he asked anxiously: for he was not likely to be in ignorance of any news that would be good to hear.

"You have always been so like a brother to me, Oswald," said she, busying herself in rearranging the table. "I almost feel as if I ought to have asked you to approve. I am engaged."

"Engaged! what—since you have been down here? Why, who on earth have you seen? Not—not to Rackstraw?"

"Rackstraw—that scoundrel?" she exclaimed, hotly; for her views as to her friend and patron had undergone an exceedingly violent change, and, in describing him, she could only use her lover's word. "Why, I took a hatred to him the very first moment I ever set eyes on him—as you must remember: and first impressions are never wrong. Dr. Rackstraw! No!"

"I thought you told me he was the best and kindest of all your friends——"

"I couldn't have said it: for it wouldn't have been true." For where is the woman who can even remotely suspect herself of ever having been in the wrong? "He has been Horace's worst enemy: so how could he ever have been my friend?"

"Horace's?"

"Horace Derwent's. I am engaged to *him*."

"Well, that *is* news," said Oswald. "And I do approve: for he must be a good fellow and really in love to take you without a penny, and—but wait: what am I thinking of?——"

"What indeed? Why, he was as poor as I was, until——"

But Oswald was but half listening: for he was recalling his own former fears lest this very thing might be, and how he had done his best to delay a crisis that promised to end in the engagement to the brother of the man whom he still held answerable for her sister's death—for that Rosamond must in truth be dead, had at last been borne in upon his mind. Then other matters had made him forget the danger: and what could he do now? It was true that Horace Derwent could not be held answerable for his brother's crimes: but such had become his own relations to the name of Derwent that he could only feel as a Corsican who hears that his own sister is about to wed into the family of their hereditary foes.

Sophy herself, ignorant as she was of any possible reason for its cause, could not fail to read the trouble in his face: and then

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she, for her part, remembered how hard this man had always seemed towards her and hers—as hard as he had been kind, and kind only so long as it was in his own way. He had sought to oppose her in everything, since her uncle died: and some secret certainty that he would oppose her in this also had much to do with her timid postponement of her great news.

"And there is so much to tell you," said she, "and I should have told it long ago if—if the doctors had not forbidden your being told anything real—"

"I have certainly been allowed to hear a great deal of unreal, Sophy," he said. "And as old Crowe's stories haven't done me much good, perhaps yours will. I can't lie here for ever, you know; and before I go out into the world, I should like to know how it stands."

"Of course when I became engaged to Horace, there could be no more thought of my going to Apahu. Indeed I never really wanted to go, only—there was nothing else to do. Don't you like Horace, Oswald? You looked so strangely when I mentioned him. Is there anybody else in the whole world who would have given up everything, even to his last farthing, when he might have kept them just by holding his tongue? You remember that story Dr. Rackstraw used to tell of how Horace came to be his father's heir while his elder brother was alive. That story was false, Oswald. The elder brother was the real heir; and Horace found it out, and—he is a hero, Oswald! He is seeking his brother to give back everything to him—seeking him high and low."

"What, he is seeking Lawrence Derwent too? And with a great fortune for a bait? Well, Sophy—I do know enough of that story to see that you have engaged yourself to an honest man: though——"

"There's no 'though' at all, Oswald. Honest! of course he's honest. I said he is a hero. And I'll have no meaner word."

"And how are you to live?"

"When he asked me to be his wife, he thought I was as poor as he. It is a strange story I have to tell you, Oswald—so strange that I have not dared speak of it till you were strong: and because—I am rich, Oswald: and thank God for it, since he is poor. You are in *my* house. Crossmarsh is mine again."

"Why—how in the name——"

"Madame Miranda——"

"Well?"

"She approved of everything: she thought as much of Horace as I do: she knows Lawrence Derwent; and has put Horace in the way of finding him: and she is so rich that it was nothing to her to give me Crossmarsh, and——"

"And an income besides? Is she a Princess of an Arabian tale that she buys estates as if they were yards of ribbon, only to give

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them away? And she *does* know Lawrence Derwent? And you take such gifts as though she were your own sister, instead of a stranger to us all?"

Then he set his teeth, while his heart seemed to turn to one vast ache: for she did know this Lawrence Derwent, and it was from her house that he was escaping at midnight, and armed.

"Is she here—in this house—now?" he said, in a voice so strained and hard that Sophy started, thinking him in actual pain —as he was, in very deed.

"No, Oswald. I ought to have told you nothing—you are not strong enough for real talk, after all. Are you in very much pain? What can I do? Can you sleep, if I go?"

"I am in no pain. I am strong enough to hear everything—but not strong enough to sleep upon half words. I can't guess what you can have to tell, but there is something I know from the very sound of your words. Where is this woman, then, if she is not here?"

"She would not stay here, Oswald. She had made a life for herself, out there. You see, she found everything so changed, that she only got restless, and homesick for her new country. And indeed you would not know her, any more than I. . . . . So she waited till you were out of danger . . . . . and had settled her affairs . . . . . and she is gone back to Apahu. That is all, Oswald. You may go to sleep now."

"Sophy," said Oswald, very quietly, "you are telling me, more plainly than words can tell, that I was not mad when I saw Rosamond by my bedside."

"Oswald! I *never* told you—for I had promised not to tell! She had her reasons—oh, what *have* I done now!"

"Nothing, Sophy. And since it is a secret, leave it alone. Let us talk of other things."

He took the news with such strange, nay, incredible quiet that his nurse and hostess forgot her own lapse of speech in alarm for his mind.

Never again did he mention her name. And yet his doctor, hitherto surprised at the slowness of his recovery, was thenceforth amazed and bewildered at the rapidity with which his strength came back again. Yesterday he seemed destined to be a hopeless invalid: to-morrow found him rebelliously well.

(To be continued.)

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THE FERN HUNT.

FORTH, for the chase! No eager hounds,
Nor trampling steeds are here,
Nor here the winded horn that sounds
For those that chase the deer;
But yet as blithe a company
As ever Sherwood saw
Of merry rangers we will be
All in the greenwood shaw.

Though Lincoln green nor scarlet gay
In hunter guise we wear,
For us as freshly round our way
Shall blow the woodland air,
As soft shall be the mosses spread
In forest ways, I ween,
As cool the boughs shall arch o'erhead
The forest cloisters green.

Though where we roam no bugle wakes
The echoes of the wood,
For us a daintier music breaks
The leafy solitude—
The merry lips of maidens fling
Around them jest and song,
And peals of light girl-laughter ring
The summer glades along.

No hapless creature pants or dies
For this our sport to-day;
Yet lack not we the hunter's prize
To win and bear away—
Nature's free treasures, green and rare,
These shall our guerdon be,
These are the spoils we hunters share
Under the greenwood tree.

O! Well it is with us that rove
All in the good greenwood,
If in our ladies' eyes we prove
Keen foresters and good,
Sweet thanks, sweet smiles, our toils repay,
And who so rich as we?
And blithely speeds the happy day
Under the greenwood tree.

MARK MALLETT.

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AN ACCOMPLISHED DIDDLER.

By EDMUND DOWNEY,

AUTHOR OF "ANCHOR-WATCH YARNS."

CHAPTER I.

"THE BOLD DRAGOON."

DAN BANIM was a shipbroker's "runner"—a superior class of messenger attached to a shipbroker's establishment—and had held that post in the office of Mr. Terence Freelove, in a southern Irish seaport, for upwards of twenty years.

Banim was a gloomy-looking man, about five feet two inches high, and fifty-five years of age. One would imagine, judging him by his appearance and the general tone of his conversation, that the little man could not be capable either of seeing a joke or of perpetrating a joke; yet Dan had a keen zest for fun of a rough, practical kind.

He could neither read nor write, but this fact he contrived in various ways to keep hidden; and if you desired to make him your enemy for life, the most assured way of attaining such a result was to discover his weak point—or rather to let him know you had discovered it.

He had another, and—if the expression may be pardoned—a stronger weak point, namely, a love for alcoholic drinks. This weak point he also, to his credit, was ashamed of, and he frequently endeavoured to reform by taking the pledge; but, alas, the pledge was invariably broken, and always, Dan insisted, through no fault of his. Knowing his propensity for tippling, Dan, who was nothing if not a domestic man, might be seen hurrying home on every Saturday evening as if he were flying from a dun, and no inducement could make him halt on what he called the home-trip. The reason of the hurry was in order that he might as quickly as possible present his modest weekly salary to Mrs. Banim, "for, as you know," Dan would remark, "I'm rather partial to the dhrop, an' if I kept any coin about me, 'twould be only for the benefit of Mrs. Maguire, or Misther O'Connor, or 'The Bould Dhragon.'"

Mrs. Maguire and Mr. O'Connor were the proprietors of two public-houses occasionally patronised by Dan.

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When a desire for strong drink seized hold of him, and when he had not a penny in his purse, Dan might be observed sitting quietly in a corner of one of Mr. Freelove's offices with his elbow on his knee and his hand holding up his chin. After a short consultation with himself, he would stand up and address one of the shipbroker's clerks,

"Misther Michael, could you spare me for about half-an-hour? There's an uncle of mine come home from Ameriky to bid a last farewell to his people, an' I'd like to show him the quays an' the ships." Or, "Misther John," to another of the clerks, "could you do wudout me for about twenty minutes? I have a heavy could on the chest"—here he would give vent to a gigantic cough—"an' I want to run up to the docthor for a mixture." Or, "Misther Terence," to his employer, whom he always addressed by his Christian name, "might I make so bould as to ax you to spare me for a short spell? The wife is laid up with the rheumatics, an' I want to get a bottle for her."

Of course Mr. Freelove and Mr. Freelove's clerks knew well what Dan's uncle and doctor meant, but he was always "spared." If he did return to the office the same evening, he returned in a highly intoxicated condition; and if he did not return, it was concluded that he was either at home, in a tap-room, or in a police cell.

It may seem strange that Dan should think it worth his while to ask permissionto leave an office where he was treated rather as a "character" than as an ordinary paid assistant; but Dan had a moral code of his own, and one of the regulations of this code forbade him to be absent from his duties without leave.

"Don't let the doctor make that mixture too strong, Dan!" Mr. Freelove would sometimes say; but beyond a remark of this kind, no one in the office ever expostulated with him, or attempted to convince him of the error of his ways. "There is no use in talking to Dan," Mr. Freelove would observe. "I have known him for over twenty years, and when he wants to get drunk there is only one thing to be done—let him get drunk."

Perhaps, too, it may seem curious that Banim should leave his employer's office with the deliberate intention of enjoying himself, considering that he had no money, and it is almost superfluous to add, no credit. But here came in Dan's strong point, namely, his ability to secure liquor without paying for it. But Dan was an accomplished and, so far as he knew, an original "diddler." He would, no doubt, have delighted Edgar Allan Poe, who declares that a true diddler would return a purse upon discovering that he had obtained it by an unoriginal diddle.

All his ruminations in the office corner took the one form, namely, a mental inquiry as to the most likely place to find an inexpensive drink, or series of drinks. Usually he was able to call to mind some skipper who was on a spree, and then he would

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wend his way to a public-house frequented chiefly by seafarers. Outside this house swung an old-fashioned sign, representing a soldier on horseback, and underneath the horse was painted in letters rendered very indistinct by stress of weather and the economy of the proprietor, "The Bold Dragoon."

Dan, either through ignorance or on account of his love for story-telling, always spoke of this house of entertainment as "The Bould Dhragon."

When Banim came within view of the sign of the "Dhragon" he generally halted to reconnoitre. If he observed only one or two loungers at the door, or in the immediate neighbourhood of the door, he concluded that inside the house some generous shipmaster was "paying the piper," and in this case Dan would walk boldly into the tap-room and join the noisy throng there assembled. If, on the other hand, he saw the door and its neighbourhood thronged with sailors and long-shore men, Dan knew that no generous skipper was to be found in the tap-room. Then he would wait patiently in the street until he saw some shipmaster pass, who he knew was a client of Mr. Freelove, and either a stranger, or a comparative stranger to the port.

"Fine evening, Captain—glory be to Heaven! I heard the masther sayin' to-day he was on the point of gettin' a rale tidy little freight for your ship. I think you'd betther take a look-in at the office early in the mornin'—but don't let on I gave you the wink, mind you."

The information about the freight (invented for the occasion) would put the skipper into good humour, and Dan would continue,

"I suppose you don't know much about the sights of the town. Now, there is wan of the curiousest places in the port" (pointing quickly to the swinging sign)—"There's a raal ould anshent legend belongin' to that sign. The picter you see there, sir, is Saint Pathrick, on horseback, banishin' the bould dhragon—the greatest parsecution that ever made a breakfast off an acre of grass or a widow woman wud a large family."

Sometimes the skipper would ask where the dragon was.

"Where's the dhragon?" Dan would exclaim, contemptuously. "'Tis surprised I am at a knowledgeable man like you to be axin' such questions. Where's the dhragon? Arrah, my good man! that dhragon was a hundred fathom long; an' how could you expect a poor angashore of a painther to give you even an idaya of a baste like that in a small picter? Why, they'd want the whole side of a sthreet an' a shipload of painthers to give you a fair representation of that dhragon's dimensions.

"An' now, sir," lowering his voice, "if you like to hear the mighty quare history about that selfsame sign I think we'd betther get in out of the could—an' 'tis a raal good dhrop they keeps at the 'Dhragon,' I can tell you," Dan would add in a "strictly confidential" manner.

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It was hard to resist Dan when he had made up his mind to inspire curiosity with regard to the legend, and confidence with regard to the liquor; and in nine cases out of ten the story-teller and his victim would soon be found sitting in a snug corner of the "Bold Dragoon" tap-room, with the intention, apparently, of "making a night" of it. The legend told by Dan was the following:

"'Well, when Saint Pathrick thought he had banished all the snakes, he was ridin' on his horse one day in the County Limerick wud a four-laifed shamrock stuck in his top hat, and all of a sudden what did he come across but a dhragon! As I told you, he was a hundred fathoms long from the tip of his snout to the end of his tail, an' begor Saint Pathrick got a turn at the sight of him.

"'"How dar' you,' says the saint, 'attempt to remain in the counthry after me order that all the varmin was to be banished?'

"'"I'm no varmin,' says the dhragon, as bould as brass; 'an', varmin or no varmin, I have a nine-hundred and ninety-nine years' laise of the land.'

"'"Take your hook, now, me bucko,' says Saint Pathrick, 'an' don't be givin' me any of your prate.'

"'"No, I wont,' says the dhragon. 'I'm partly,' says he, 'a discindant of wan of the ould anshent kings, an' 'twas be witch-craft I was med what I am.'

"'"You're not goin' to come over me wud your palaver,' says the saint, 'so be off about your business at wance.'

"'"I know you're afther doing a dale of good for the counthry,' says the dhragon, 'for 'tis fair blagyards most of them snakes were; but,' says he, 'I'm a horse of another colour.'

"'"Tell me,' says Saint Pathrick, 'fair and honest—aren't you afther comin' straight from the County Cork?'

"'"I am,' says the dhragon; 'an' how the mischief do you know that?'

"'"I know everything,' says the saint.

"'"So it seems,' says the dhragon, beginnin' to tremble all over.

"'"Now,' says the saint, 'I ax you, as an honorable baste, aren't you afther kissin' the Blarney Stone?'

"Begor, wud that the dhragon coloured up to the roots of his tail, an' says he,

"'"There's no desayvin' or soft-sawderin' you, I see. No, I see there's no use in thryin' to humbug you at all, Pathrick; but before I quits the counthry, allow me to remark that I could do a dale of destruction wud a few lashes of me tail.'

"Begor, whin St. Pathrick sees his tail wobbling about he thought to himself that it was the best of his play to come to an understandin' with this dhragon, an' prevint him from spoilin' the counthry on his way to the say; so says he, 'Now as ye tould me the truth, I'll make a bargain wid you, although 'tis agin me conscience to make bargains wid heretics.'

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"'What's the bargain?' says the dhragon, brightenin' up a bit.

"'I'll give ye a renewal of your laise in the salt occan,' says he, 'if ye hook it at wance an' keep your tail quiet—if ye don't agree to that,' says the saint, standin' up in the stirrups, 'I'll read the curse of Cromwell agen you this minnit!'

"Begor, at the mintion of Cromwell, the dhragon got no end of a shiverin', an' says he, in a thremblin' voice, 'I'll go, acorra, I'll go quietly.'

"'That's a dacent fellow,' says Saint Pathrick; 'but, mind ye now, 'tis a bargain that ye keep to yerself at the bottom of the say, an' never torment any mortial man or woman.'

"''Tis a bargain,' says the dhragon, spittin' on his fist; an' Saint Pathrick an' the bould dhragon shuk hands.

"'Keep your tail steady now, you blagyard,' says the saint, as the dhragon began to move off towards the Shannon, whistling 'The Protestant Boys,' just to annoy the dacent man.

"'I will, yer reverence,' says the dhragon——an' that's what they call the Thraytey of Limerick!"

"But when I discharged a cargo in Limerick last," a skipper would sometimes say, "they told me that the Treaty of Limerick had been violated."

"Of course it has," would be Dan's reply. "Sure the dhragon is no other than the say-serpent; an' every time he puts his snout above the wather he violates his Thraytey, an' thin Saint Pathrick makes him do the hardest pinance he can think of—often he ordhers him to obsarve a black fast for nine hundred and ninety-nine days, an' he'll allow him nothing but a red herrin' wance a day. It's a powerful constitution that dhragon must have to hould out so long on an empty stomach almost—for what's a red herrin' to a hungry dhragon?" And Dan, evidently amazed at the fasting powers of his dragon, would swallow a tumbler full of whisky-and-water at a draught.

Chapter II.

FURTHER STRATEGY.

But occasions often arose when Dan's chief resource—the "Bould Dhragon"—failed him, and then he was compelled to have recourse to other and even less honourable methods of filling the flowing bowl.

In the afternoon—a time when trade was at its lowest ebb in Mrs. Maguire's dingy-looking establishment—Dan would lounge up to the counter.

"Good morrow, Mrs. Maguire, ma'am."

"Good day, Dan."

"I hope yourself is well, ma'am, and the masther." Mr. Maguire

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was a ship carpenter and was absent at his work the greater part of the day.

"Very well, thank you, Dan."

"I suppose I may have a look at the *Shippin' Gazette*, ma'am," rubbing his spectacles with a red cotton handkerchief and then adjusting them carefully across the bridge of his nose with forefingers and thumbs.

Dan of course could not read a line; nevertheless he would leisurely spread out the newspaper, place his elbows on the counter, and support his head in his hands. For about five minutes he would fix his gaze on the columns of the *Gazette*, and then, with a great sigh, lift his head and exclaim,

"Shockin', shockin'—a power of wrecks, to be sure! 'tis enough to make wan's blood run cold." Then with a shiver, "I'm afeard I'll have to ax you to sarve me with a naggin of sperits, ma'am, although I'm not dhrinkin' at all these times."

Mrs. Maguire then would supply Dan with the liquor, and swallowing it hastily the old man would resume his perusal of the newspaper. After another five minutes or so he would heave a heavy sigh again and fold up the paper slowly.

"Begor, I wouldn't be a sailor for all the goold in the mint, ma'am. 'Tis thankful to Heaven you ought to be that you have a husband that can make an honest livin' ashore. I'll be goin', ma'am." Then, placing his hands in the pockets of his trousers, Dan would proceed to make a lounging exit, when Mrs. Maguire would say sharply,

"Dan!"

"Well, ma'am?"

"You didn't pay me for that whisky."

"Oh, glory be to Heavens!" raising his hands in pious horror, "is it dhramin' the woman is?"

"Come now, Dan, you know you didn't pay me."

"Arrah, what's comin' over you, woman? Don't you remember me takin' a shillin' out of me waistcoat pocket and handin' it to you, and don't you remember handin' me fourpence wud your own two fists out of the till?—What's comin' over the dacent woman, at all?"

Mrs. Maguire, who was getting up in years and whose memory was, as Dan knew, none of the best, would pause for a few seconds and then renew the attack.

"You're trying to humbug me, Dan Banim. You never gave me any shilling, and well you know you didn't."

"Now, now, is it sayrious you are, ma'am, or are thryin' to take a rise out of me? I'm grown too ould now for play-acting of this soort."

"Come, Dan, pay the money at once, or I'll make a complaint against you to Mr. Freelove. There's always something wrong about you and your money whenever you come in here."

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"Begor then, for two pins I'd never laive you any more of me custom."

"Take your custom where you like, but pay me now for the whisky—do you hear me?"

"Oh, I hear you well enough. 'Tis ashamed of yourself you ought to be, I can tell you." Then approaching the counter and gazing furtively around the shop, in order, presumably, to see that no one could overhear him, Dan would whisper,

"Begor, 'twouldn't astonish me at all if 'twas takin' a dhrop you were, Mrs. Maguire. That's the only way I can account for the sayrious loss of memory wud you."

This last thrust usually scored a victory for Dan, who had discovered that Mrs. Maguire occasionally had recourse to the bottle, and was always in a lively state of fear lest her husband should become aware of the fact; and the wily shipbroker's runner would leave the shop, muttering audibly, "Poor soul! the memory isn't what it used to be, at all."

The system thus described was a system which could be adopted only at intervals, and when Dan considered all memory of previous transactions of a like nature had faded from Mrs. Maguire's mind. But, in the meantime, if compelled by necessity, he would invent and carry into execution many other subtle plans for deceiving that old lady.

With another publican, the Mr. O'Connor before mentioned, Dan experienced greater difficulties, and it was only on very rare occasions he could hit upon an idea for getting to the windward of Mr. O'Connor. One successful scheme, which resulted in a fit of *delirium tremens* for the schemer, and also in a serious quarrel with Mr. Freelove, was carried into execution in this wise.

Dan, one evening, observed O'Connor standing, smoking a long clay pipe, in the doorway of his house. At this time Banim was almost at his wits' end to discover how he was to get "a good dhrop," as he called it; and, indeed, he was not looking particularly lively on account of a lengthy and enforced abstinence from liquor. When he saw O'Connor in the doorway he walked slowly along the street, his eyes fixed on the ground. As he was passing the door of the public-house he lifted his head, as if by accident, and muttered in a hollow tone of voice—

"Good evening, Misther O'Connor."

"Oh, is that yourself, Dan? You're not lookin' well, I can tell you. Is there anything troublin' you?"

"Not much, sir, not much—only a sort of a heavy could on the chest. I hope the missus and the children are quite well, sir?"

"Pretty well, Dan; and how is Mr. Freelove? I haven't seen him for ages."

"Oh, he's purty well, thank you—pulling along, pulling along." Then his face brightening, "Begor 'twas near forgottin' I was what brought me this way."

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"Forgetting what, Dan?"

"Ah! 'tis a quare man, the masther is—a quare man, intirely—but the heart of a lion, sir, the heart of a lion. Do you know what he says to me to-day; an' by the same token 'twas talkin' of yourself, an' the dacent way you conduct the business brought on his remark to me?"

"Well, what did he say?"

"Well, sir, 'Dan,' says he. 'Sir,' says I. 'You're notlook in' well in your health at all,' says he, 'lattherly.' 'Throth, an' you're right there,' says I. 'Now, Dan,' says he, 'I know your wages is only enough to keep you just in house an' home, an' 'tis good nourishin' diet an' wholesome dhrink you want to pull you together.' 'You're right there agen, sir,' says I, wondherin' what was in the dacent man's mind. 'Dan,' says he, puttin' his hand on me showldher, 'go up to that same honest man, O'Connor!'—I give you his own words, sir—'an' tell him from me, to supply you with whatever you like to dhrink—in raison, mind you—and to charge it to me, an' I'll pay the bill wance a month until you recover your health an' strength.' '"Tis too good altogether, you are, sir,' says I. 'Don't say another word,' says he; 'you have sarved me faithfully for nearly five-an'-twenty years, an' 'tis me duty to look after your health!' says he. An' now, sir, don't you think I'm right in sayin' Misther Terence have the heart of a lion?"

"'Twas very good of him, indeed, Dan."

"Good! good isn't the word for it. To tell you the truth I could scarcely musther up the courage to presume on his ginerosity—but sure I'd betther take him at his word, or 'tis laid up for life I'll be, an' that 'ud be a raal bad job for the governor—the Heavens be his bed!"

The circumstantial account of his conversation with Mr. Freelove, told in Dan's quiet, plausible manner, completely banished all thoughts of deception from the publican's mind, and for a full month Dan was seldom sober. Just as the month was about to expire he determined to make one final effort, which was to eclipse all previous performances of his in the way of drinking. He succeeded, and the result was an attack of *delirium tremens*.

Chapter III.

DAN'S PILGRIMAGE.

As soon as Dan began to recover, he learned that he would have to pay very dearly indeed for the trick played upon Mr. O'Connor. The publican's bill was, after some demur, paid by Mr. Freelove, but Mr. Freelove was so enraged that he sent a messenger to Dan, telling the convalescent reprobate he would never again allow him

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inside his office, and that no earthly power could induce him to change his mind.

"What'll become of us, at all; oh, what'll become of us at all," sobbed Mrs. Banim, as she retailed Mr. Freelove's message to her husband. "'Tis into the workhouse we'll have to go, you shockin' ould vagabond. Oh, what came over me at all ever to marry the likes of you?"

"Whisht, woman, whisht!" muttered Dan, angrily, from his couch. "I'm in no state of health now to be listenin' to your noise."

"An' whose fault is that? whose fault is that, you old ruffian? Is it mine?"

"It's nayther my fault nor yours—'tis the infayrior quality of the whisky that upset me."

"Jokin' about it you are, is it," cried Mrs. Banim, furiously. Then, hearing a voice in the passage, she suddenly changed her tone, "Dan—here's Father Pat."

Mrs. Banim, after hastily arranging her hair before a small piece of a looking-glass which stood on a table in the room, rushed to the door, and Dan could hear her say,

"Oh, your reverence, 'tisn't fit to be seen at all he is. Sure he's broke down altogether, an' they won't take him back at the office any more. 'Tis the heart-scalded woman, I am."

Then Father McCarthy, who was Dan's parish priest and confessor, followed by Mrs. Banim, entered the miserable-looking apartment, where Dan was reclining on an old settle bed.

Father Pat McCarthy had known Dan for many years, and took a melancholy interest in him. Over and over again had he advised, warned, and threatened him, but without effect. The priest was a kind-hearted old gentleman, and although the purport of his visit was to inflict verbal chastisement, he had scarcely the heart to carry out his intention when he gazed at the feedle-looking man stretched at full length on the bed.

"I humbly hopes your reverence will excuse me for not rising, but 'tis raal wake I am, glory be to Heaven!"

"Dan! Dan!" said the priest, shaking his head. "This is a shocking state of affairs. How often have I warned you against the evil of your ways?"

"Don't be too hard on me, your reverence," cried Dan, piteously. "I know I'm a bad boy, but 'tis the last time I'll ever touch a dhrop of the hard stuff, I gives you my word."

"Ah! if I could only take your word for it. But you have broken not only your word, but your solemn pledge, so frequently, that I haven't much faith in your promises."

"True enough, your reverence; but this is the worst lesson I ever got——"

"It manes the workhouse for us, Father Pat," put in Mrs. Banim.

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"Arrah, hould your tongue, honest woman," snarled Dan. "Spake when you're spoken to, if you plase. His reverence was going to say something to me when you put in your word."

"I was about to remark," said Father McCarthy, "that I came here to impose a penance on you, Daniel—an informal penance of course—for your bad conduct."

"A penance!" cried Dan, eagerly. "I'm glad to hear it, your reverence, for it shows you have some hope of me yet."

"Yes," continued the priest, "and my orders to you, Daniel, are that the first day you are able to leave your room, you must go round the stations—the whole fourteen of them, and——"

"*Father Pat!*" interrupted Dan, with a groan.

"I said you were to go round the stations, and you must repeat six Pater-and-Aves at every station; and, mind you," continued the priest, impressively, "you are to say your prayers on your bended knees. I'll have no nonsense about it."

"Oh, Father Pat!" moaned the old man in the bed. "Sure, my poor ould knees would never stand the sthrain, an' in the wake state of health I'm in now, too. Don't ax me, your reverence," clasping his hands in supplication. "Don't ax me. 'Tis almost a cripple I am as it is, your reverence."

"I have told you what you are to do," said the priest, solemnly; "and when you perform your penance faithfully on your bended knees I'll believe in the sincerity of your promises of reformation. And then, perhaps, I'll use my influence with Mr. Freelove in your behalf.—Good morning, Daniel. Good morning, Mrs. Banim."

"God bless your reverence," said Mrs. Banim, fervently, as she closed her fingers over a sovereign silently slipped into her hand by the priest.

Dan was silent.

The nature of the penance imposed upon Dan may not be generally known. To "do the stations" properly, one has to make a sort of pilgrimage inside a church—usually around almost the whole interior circumference, and to halt at fourteen different "stations" for the purpose of reciting certain prayers. Father McCarthy's church was a spacious one, and Dan, in his enfeebled condition, could imagine nothing more terrible than the penance which he was bound to perform.

"O murdher! murdher!" he cried, when the priest had departed. "The knees will be fairly wore out of me. Six Paters-and-Aves on me bended knees, fourteen times, an' the round of the chapel into the bargain!" And here he fairly broke down at the picture he had conjured up. "'Twould kill a horse, it would. Oh my poor bones!—an' think of me rheumatism, too, Mary," he moaned, addressing his wife.

It never occurred to Dan that he could by any possibility evade the performance of his penance. He did not dream of disobeying

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the priest. It was sufficient for him that Father Pat had commanded him to "do the stations"—and do the stations he must, if he were, martyr-like, to perish after reciting the final Pater-and-Ave. Neither did it occur to him to tell his pastor an ordinary falsehood. Had any of his friends suggested such a way out of the difficulty, Dan would have been compelled to regard that friend as a contemptible and grossly unintellectual being.

Three days after the priest's visit Dan felt sufficiently recovered to leave the house, and then he knew that the dreaded hour of his pilgrimage was not far off. As he was putting on his battered old hat a light seemed to break in upon him. Firstly, he smiled; then in a few seconds, he chuckled; and in a few seconds more he burst into laughter. "I have it!" he cried. "I have it!—but I must take care not to let on to Mary." Mrs. Banim was then at Mr. Freelove's, endeavouring to soften that gentleman's heart with regard to her husband. "Who *will* I thrust?" soliloquised Dan. "I think I may take young Tom Delaney"—a messenger in Mr. Freelove's establishment—"into me confidence. He's a cunnin' youngsther, and fond of a lark."

During the day Dan went to the clerk of Father McCarthy's church and asked him to lend him the keys at night after the church would be closed. He told the clerk he had a "heavy" penance to perform and he didn't like that he should be observed during the performance. The clerk knew he would be safe in trusting Dan with the keys, so he promised to lend them.

At nine o'clock the clerk locked up the church, and on his way home left the keys at Banim's house. About ten o'clock Dan had re-opened the church, and after gazing for awhile up and down the street, he gave a low whistle.

In a few minutes a young man, trundling a wheelbarrow before him, approached the door of the church.

"Aisy, bad luck to you!" cried Dan, in an angry tone. "The noise you're making with that ould barrow is enough to wake up all the sperits in the churchyard. Why didn't you grease the wheel properly?"

"Is it all right?" asked Tom Delaney, ignoring Dan's query about the grease.

"'Tis," replied Dan. "Rowl it in here. Quietly, now. Take it aisy, bad luck to you. If this was ever to come to Father Pat's ears, I'd never get peace or ease in this world or the next."

Delaney rolled the barrow into the dark, silent church, and Dan closed the door from the inside.

"Is there plenty hay in it?" asked Dan, feeling the well of the barrow.

"A stone of it at the very least," chuckled Delaney. "You'll be more comfortable than in a feather bed, Dan."

The barrow was then rolled up to the first "station" and Dan was lifted into the barrow by his companion. The old man settled

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himself into a comfortable kneeling posture on the hay and fervently recited his first instalment of Pater-and-Aves.

When he had finished his prayers he cried,

"Now, Tom, me darlin' fellow, be steady, and don't be laughin' and grinnin' there like a play-acthor. Take care you don't run the sufferin' penitent foul of any chairs or forms in the dark. Get a firm grip of the handles, for, be the hole of me coat, if you spill me I'll be your enemy for life! Now then," he cried, in true nautical style, "thrip your anchor, me dacent fellow, and I'll set the foretopsail for the voyage."

Delaney grasped the handles firmly, and rolled the barrow and its contents, noisily enough, towards the second "station," the penitent in the meanwhile holding to his lips a bottle containing a quart of the wine of the country.

The second station was reached safely, and Dan, prior to reciting his second instalment of prayers, cried,

"Bravo, Tom! put that to your lips, me fine fellow," handing his companion the bottle—"while I get through me work; but don't be too heavy on it, Tom, if you love me, for 'tis a long an' a dark voyage we have before us yet, and the wind is from the easthard."

Next morning Dan waited upon Father McCarthy and informed that unsuspecting gentleman that he had faithfully performed his penance—"every foot of the road on me bended knees, your reverence; and 'twas only be a fair meracle the ould joints of me knees held out against the heavy sthrain that was put on 'em."

Through Father McCarthy's influence Banim was soon afterwards reinstated in Mr. Freelove's office, but he lives in hourly terror lest Father Pat should learn how it was he performed his pilgrimage.

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A CHRISTMAS CAMP ON THE SAN GABR'EL.

LAMAR and his Rangers camped at dawn on the banks of the San Gabr'el,
Under the mossy live oaks, in the heart of a lonely dell;
With the cloudless Texas sky above, and the musquite grass below,
And all the prairie lying still, in a misty, silver'y glow.

The sound of the horses, cropping grass, the fall of a nut full ripe,
The stir of a weary soldier, or the tap of a smoked-out pipe,
Fell only as sounds in a dream may fall upon a drowsy ear,
Till the Captain said, "It is Christmas Day! so, boys, we will spend it here;

"For the sake of our homes and our childhood, we will give the day its dues."
Then some leaped up to prepare the feast, and some sat still to muse.
And some pull'd scarlet yupon berries, and wax-white mistletoe,
To garland the stand-up rifles—for Christmas has no foe.

And every heart had a pleasant thought, or a tender memory
Of unforgotten Christmas tides that never more might be;
They felt the thrill of a mother's kiss, they heard the happy psalm,
And the men grew still, and all the camp was full of a gracious calm.

"Halt!" cried the sentinel, and lo! from out of the brushwood near
There came, with a weary, fainting step, a man in mortal fear,
A brutal man with a tiger's heart, but yet, he made this plea—
"I am dying of hunger and thirst, do what you will with me."

They knew him well, who did not know the cruel San Sabatan?
The robber of the Rio Grande who spared not any man.
In low fierce tones they called his name, and looked at a coil of rope;
And the man crouched down in abject fear, how could he dare to hope?

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The Captain had just been thinking of the Book his mother read,
Of a Saviour born on Christmas Day, who bow'd on the Cross his head;
Blending the thought of his mother's tears with the Holy Mother's grief,—
And when he saw San Sabatan, he thought of the dying thief.

He spoke to the men in whispers, and they heeded the words he said,
And brought to the perishing robber, water, and meat, and bread.
He ate and drank like a famish'd wolf, and then lay down to rest,
And the camp perchance had a stiller feast for its strange Christmas guest.

But, or ever the morning dawn'd again, the Captain touch'd his hand:
"Here is a horse, and some meat and bread, fly to the Rio Grande!
Fly for you life! We follow hard, touch nothing on your way—
Your life was only spared because 'twas Jesus Christ's Birthday."

He watched him ride as the falcon flies, then turned to the breaking day;
The men awòke, the Christmas berries were quietly cast away;
And, full of thought, they saddled again, and rode off into the West—
May God be merciful to them, as they were to their guest!

AMELIA BARR.

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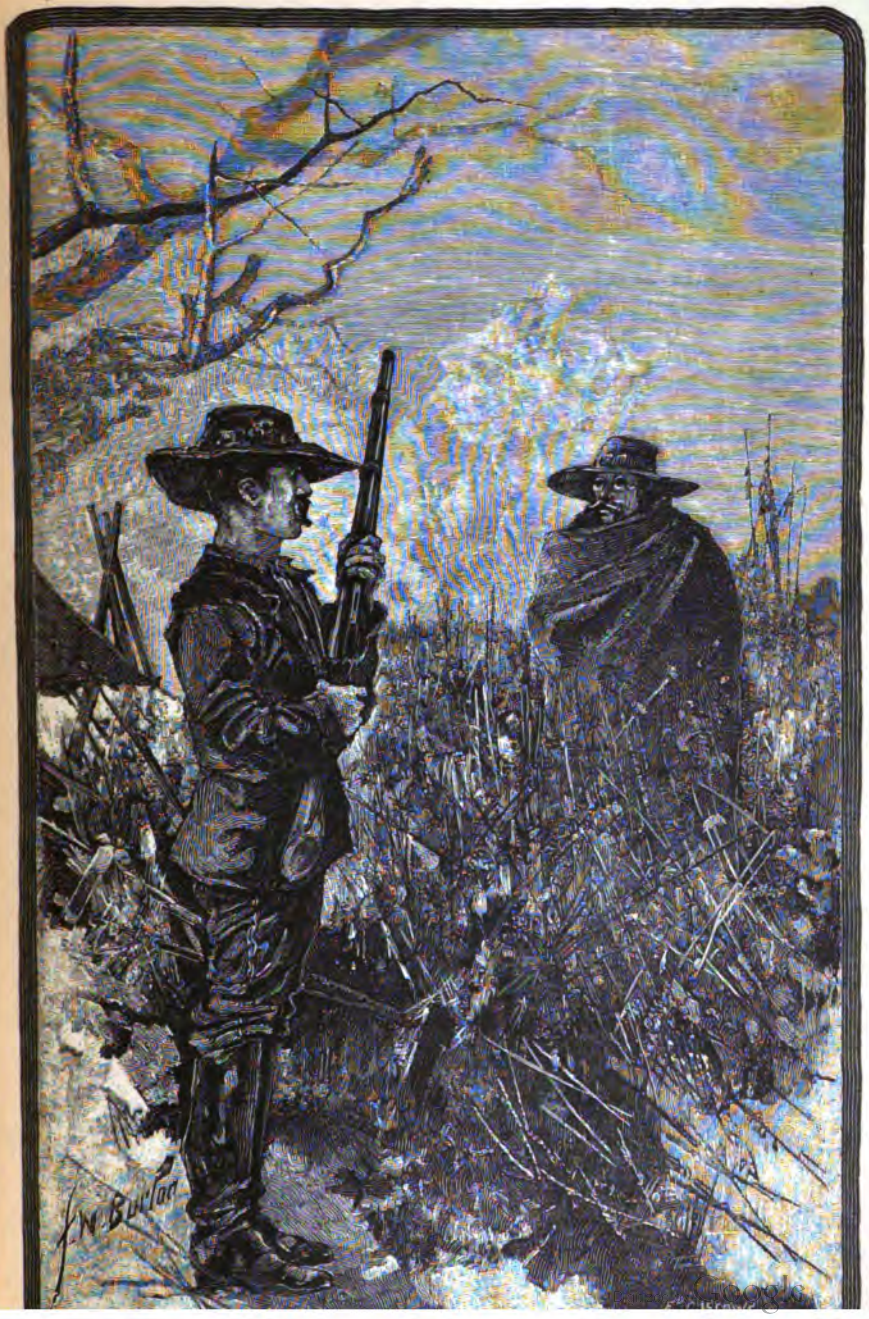
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SILVERMEAD.

Chapter XXIV.

Jack Forbes' illness turned out to be a bad case of rheumatic fever, attributable directly to the length of time he had been in that lake on the day of the accident, and to the neglect of proper remedial measures immediately afterwards. Had he lost not a moment in putting on dry things, partaken of a moderate portion of those hot spirits and water of which so superfluous a quantity was poured down the most noble throat of his illustrious co-sufferer, and had he then run half a mile in the sun, until a thorough reaction had set in, it is probable that no serious consequences to what he contemptuously termed a mere ducking would have followed that really laughable adventure.

However, although he was severely punished for his imprudence, he now found himself in the very best of hands—surrounded indeed with everything than can mitigate a severe attack of illness, both as regards professional skill, and material comfort; as also in respect of his best and oldest friend's brotherly affection and fostering care.

After the first day the case had been left entirely in the hands of Sir Ewing Crofton, the other eminent M.D. whom Brudenell had called in, declaring that except in the event of a consultation becoming necessary, his services would not be farther required.

To all who are in any way acquainted with rheumatic fever, it is unnecessary to explain how terribly painful a disease it is. How the slightest movement becomes exquisite agony, and how essential is the most skilful nursing that can be procured.

A somewhat uncommon feature of the malady was often present, from the very first night, in Forbes' case, and this was prolonged and violent fits of delirium. Fortunately, there never was any one more utterly without secrets than our friend Jack, but of this Sir Ewing could know nothing, and he was bound—since he had it in his power—to place by his bed-side a thoroughly confidential person. Fortune, while hitting her hardest blows, yet constantly and proverbially selects just such moments for flinging to us some compensating favour; and now

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when she had prostrated this good youth upon a bed of racking pain, what does she do but send him as nurse, under the visible providence of Sir Ewing, the very woman who had tended and weaned him as an infant. Her own baby—she never had but one—died at a few weeks old, and being endowed with strong maternal feelings, she adopted, so far as the affections went, the babe she was hired to nurse in lieu of the one she had lost. For some years, little Jack was the light of her eyes, and repaid her as a gratefully disposed little being with a tender gentle nature knows so well how to do. Then both Jack's parents died at no very long interval from each other; the child became, as we have seen, the ward of his cousin, Lord Hammersley, and the latter being nearly always across the main, and the child an orphan, he was sent early to a preparatory school; thence in due course to Harrow, and, little by little, communication between nurse and child languished, until, as such intercourse nearly always does, it died a natural death, and now for a dozen years or more, neither had heard, though both thought kindly of the other.

"And so you have got back an old favourite of years ago, eh, Mrs. Barrow?" said Sir Ewing Crofton, one day, as the patient lay drowsily resting after a delirious night.

"Lor' bless 'im!" piously ejaculated the nurse; "and of all I ever tended, the only one I ever loved; and to get him back in such a state," she added, bending over the invalid as if he were her own offspring, and smoothing his hair and pillow. "But you will save him, sir, won't you?"

"I hope so, nurse, indeed, but his life is quite as much in your hands as my own. It is to the great importance of detail, of nursing, in fact, that you owe this chance meeting with him again. You know how often you have won my good opinion. All I have to impress upon you now is not to be over anxious. That is why relations are so often bad nurses in dangerous cases. They either lose their heads, or else knock up."

Mrs. Barrow, as we see, was an old and trusted *employée* of the great M.D., her only drawback being that she rather presumed upon this to indulge at times in an amount of garrulity which it pained his good heart to cut short; yet which, if he listened to, would apparently never end.

On this occasion he was waited for by nothing but his luncheon, and so he was fain to bear with her a little.

"Oh, doctor," she went on, "he was the sweetest tempered babe, the most affectionate child as ever cut teeth. You see that scar over his left temple? Many's the time I've kissed that place. His poor dear mother, sir, was sickening for her last illness, though sitting up by the drawing-room fire, and she was trying to get a little sleep. Little Jacky, as we called him then, was playing about the room, and howbeit not a noisy boy, I saw he disturbed the good lady sadly. Well, I'd told him twice or over to be quiet,

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but still he would keep restless like, and now and again 'bang' over would go a chair, or down fall a book, and such like. Now seeing this and finding as the poor lady could get no rest for him, I catches the little fellow up and tries to explain the case to him; mark, sir, he was scarce four years old that time. Well, his little face gets as serious as serious, and he watched his mamma all the time I was talking and he sucking the forefinger of his left hand —most children sucks their right, but one's no better than the other for that, and then he puts his little fat arms round my neck, —you wouldn't think he'd been a chubby child to see him lyin' there to-day, would you, sir? and he says, 'Nanny, Nanny,' he says, whisperin' as hard as ever he could, that I was ready to die, not laughin' out. 'Nanny, me go play staircase?' So I kisses him back and bundles him out toys and all. You see he were 'customed like to play alone on them 'stairs' as he called them, not but what I never thinks the thickest carpeted as these was, is safe for children, but his papa choosed to let him, so hinder him I couldn't. Sure enough he hadn't been there ten minutes, as still as any mouse, when I heard a noise like a fall, a great thump like, but never a cry. I was out in no time, and never a doubt but he slipped and fell and cut his head open awful 'gen' the wheel of his go-cart, as it's a sin and a shame as the toyshops is allowed to cover with tin, I say.

"Well, I picks him up and I was frightened out of my wits, and I stops the blood as well as I can, but the brave little man whatever do you think is all he says? Why, 'Hush, Nanny, poor mamma sleep.' Yes, sir, sure as if I was to be struck dead this minute, not a word else. 'Hush, Nanny, poor mamma sleep.'"

"Yes," said Mr. Ewing, quite interested in this graphic recital, "I can easily believe every word you tell me. I knew both the parents intimately, and a kinder or happier couple never lived. Do you know, Mrs. Barrow, that every day confirms my belief in the fact that goodness of heart is at least as hereditary as heart disease; I mean that parents transmit their moral qualities to the children equally with their bodily ones."

"Well, doctor, of course you know."

"If your patient pulls through I feel sure you will have a grateful nature to deal with. I suppose he has not yet recognised you."

"Oh, bless you, doctor, no, sir, and I thought him too ill to put questions to."

"You did right. Even agreeable excitements must be avoided. See, our long talk appears to make him restless, despite our professional sick room voices."

And so saying, the kindly Sir Ewing betook him contentedly to his tepid luncheon.

It was precisely during the above conversation that Brudenell

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rode up to speak to Cyril Acton who was leaning over the rails in Rotten Row.

"Ah, Acton," said the former, bending from his saddle to shake hands, "how are you?"

"All right, thanks. How is Jack?"

"Well, he doesn't get on as we could wish."

"No, I was sorry to receive a bad report when I sent my man round last night to enquire."

"By-the-bye, talking of him reminds me. A very old friend of your family is most anxious to meet you."

"Ah!" replied Acton absently, for his gaze was just then following a yellow haired syren with a graceful seat.

"Deuced smart girl that!—know who she is?"

Thus appealed to Horace turned in the indicated direction.

"Not I. Nothing much I should say. But you won't guess who the old friend is?"

"My dear Brudenell, it is too hot for guessing riddles—I even wonder you care to get on a horse. Well, who is he that craves the honour of seeing me?"

"Sir Ewing Crofton."

Acton grew livid, to the great surprise of Horace, who was looking straight at him, and who vainly asked himself what it meant.

"Yes, it is confoundedly hot!" was all Acton said, and lifting his hat from his brow he made a great parade of wiping his face. Not but what he was far too sharp not to see that his sudden pallor had been observed, or to imagine this shallow subterfuge would deceive Horace. But one must do something—for even doing nothing is in a sense doing something—at every juncture, and when there is nothing really good to be done, why one must do as one can. Horace, who had naturally no suspicion of the truth—and the other's sudden emotion never made him dream of there being any hidden infamy in the matter—Horace went on chiefly to break the silence:

"He seems—Sir Ewing—to mix you up somehow or other with your brother who died a few years back."

Acton had resumed his hat and with it his habitual cool aspect and manner.

"Ah! I daresay. Oh, I have often heard my people talk of him. Tell the old gentleman I shall be very glad, charmed, to meet him, I am sure. I say, here comes my Amazon again."

Horace heeded not this last remark, but continued:

"Well, when shall it be? You can't think what a point he made of it. He said he had reasons. On more than one occasion he has renewed the subject."

"Now that is very good of him. Well, let me see, oh, any day."

"Any day is no day," said Brudenell, smiling.

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"To-morrow? No, to-morrow I can't. Next day I run down to the Isle of Wight for a week, but, yes, say Thursday week, at any time he likes. Where shall it be?"

"Well, he is the busier man. I will drop you a line; and now I'll go on, for as you see, my nag hates standing."

No sooner had he ridden off than Acton, quitting the crowded walk, struck across the Park to where, even in the season's height, the passers over the expanse of grass interfere but little with its solitude.

"Sir Ewing? the devil!" was his first mental ejaculation. "Confound his long memory! Of course he has always been my rock ahead, my most dreaded source of danger. I had hoped that after so many, many years—yes, it is nearly a quarter of a century—that he would have forgotten, or that the facts might be sufficiently blurred in his mind to have lost their vividness and interest. Now, let me resume the main facts as calmly as I may.

"Some two and twenty years ago, when I was three years old, Sir Ewing Crofton was in constant attendance upon my mother as physician. At that time my late brother was born. The specialist who was called in on that occasion is, fortunately, dead. Sir Ewing then knew me by my real name of Lucius, if any. Now my brother, the true Cyril, being born a cripple, was, from a medical point of view, a far more interesting subject than myself, and as I believe all these great doctors keep diaries, or at least case-books, as I fancy I have heard them called, no doubt my brother figures conspicuously in the records kept by Sir Ewing, or else why are the facts so fresh in his recollection, and why is he dying to see me?

"Well, seventeen years pass by, and then Cyril—Lucius, as the world believes—dies. Accordingly, Sir Ewing expects to find in me a lad of twenty-two, bearing unmistakable signs of having come into existence as a rickety imperfect being, for the case was pronounced from the first a hopeless one.

"Now, either this M.D. has heard that I am rather a fine specimen of humanity, or, worse still, I may have been somewhere unconsciously pointed out to him. If I meet him as proposed, I am ruined, for he says:

"'How is this? No cripple infant, like the one I knew, could ever develop into what you are. You must be the fine little boy of three whom I also remember, and who, owing to the flaw in your parents' first marriage, could never succeed to the title. You, therefore, are Lucius, and my patient here, Mr. John Forbes, is heir presumptive to Lord Hammersley and not you, as the "Peerage" ignorantly states. There has been some juggling here.' Such a charge coming from such a source would be utterly unanswerable. I might swear ignorance, and thus escape personal blame, but my undoing would yet be complete, and the disgrace of

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my father and mother being prosecuted for fraud would cast the full shade of its ignominy on myself.

"What is to be done? It is of little use to be clever as Lucifer when no good move exists! I *am* clever, thank my stars, and I know it. No time is to be lost.

"That improvised journey to Cowes was very ready. Let me see, let me see! Shall I really go there or somewhere else? The great point is to get away. Sir Ewing must be growing old. He may forget the whole matter if he does not see or hear of me, or at least, he may gradually so far lose interest in the strange romance in real life as to cease endeavouring to sift it to the bottom.

"I'll go down to the Isle of Wight to-morrow, and gain breathing time. I must have a space to think, and that while I think myself safe. Will it end in Canada? Perhaps so, but then, how about Camilla? Camilla, that I have promised myself—whom I have sworn shall be mine?

"Weird fascination! Until I saw her but a few weeks ago, I should have laughed to scorn whoever told me I could care for any woman. For woman in general, yes,—for individual woman, no. I always loved beauty—who but fools do not? But I cared no more for the particular owners of it than does the fruit plucker trouble his head as to which tree he culls from, so only that the blushing prizes be fair and luscious.

"Yet now I know also too well, that for this girl I am capable of any weakness, any rashness, even of playing life's game in so warped and unwise a manner as to compromise my very identity, my birthright.

"Oh, ambition! Jealous, beloved ambition, you who tolerate no rivalry, the one saint I ever bend me to invoke, come now to my aid!"

Chapter XXV.

It is June. The month of joy if such the year possesses.

Through all the charm of spring there lurks the trace of effort, Nature labours, but with summer's first real month comes the sense of achievement, the sweet repose of victory.

It is June at Silvermead. At lovely, stately Silvermead, where that leafy month is wont to be so proud of itself.

But this year sorrow well-nigh unbearable forbids Camilla Harding to revel in—almost to see its gladsome pageantry, or even to taste its perfumed breath.

Yet she was framed, so to speak, for joy. If ever woman seemed to have the attributes of a sunbeam it was she.

Happy herself, to shed her rays on those around was the original aim with which she had been sent among us dull, suffering children of Adam.

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But sin had spoiled this holy and beneficent destiny—sin that mars all things. Had Cave Harding possessed a conscience he would not have sunk to a course which ended in compelling him to seek his poor child like a thief in the night. Had Acton not been an utter scoundrel, Horace Brudenell would have received that second letter from Camilla, and all had been well.

Our poor little heroine was not a very good one at bearing sorrows. I do not mean morally but physically. With all her fondness for pleasure and filial indulgence she was a holy little thing, much more so indeed than she herself dreamt of. Always addicted to the exercises of religion, she had become of late so devoted to prayer, that often, after long periods spent on her knees, she would rise up with only the vaguest idea of the time thus employed. Hope, as far as this world was concerned, was dead within her, and inevitably her health gave way. When the sanguine have nothing left to hope for, they fade slowly and die. This it was that was killing her.

There are those who seem to have a special capacity for suffering. I do not mean those grumbling persons of whom it has been wittily said that they are never happy unless miserable: but I allude to such as would very loudly pronounce for happiness if they could get it, but who, finding that sorrow is their portion here below, bow so cheerfully to their lot, accept a life-long divorce from joy with either so much Christian resignation or so much philosophy that they are enabled to bear their cross to extreme old age.

The very opposite of this type was Camilla. She had believed in, fancied she had found, and then prayed hard to secure happiness; but now she had lost it, and though, as we have seen, she dearly loved her father, yet that affection alone no longer made her care to live.

Perhaps she felt very palpably that death was laying its hand on her.

All this may seem unnatural in a girl who two months ago was full of health and strength, of youth and hope; in many cases it would be so, but Camilla was an exceptional girl.

It were almost impossible to define the depth of her love. Horace was all very well for an average young man; but the degree to which a woman loves has little or nothing to do with the object who inspires her devotion, however much she may fancy he has.

Had Camilla never met her Horace, she would no doubt have encountered, loved, and wedded someone else. All the immensity of her love for him came out of the greatness and depth of her own pure soul.

It is a great mistake to imagine that holy and intensely refined natures cannot love violently—fatally. On the contrary they are the only consummate, the true masters of loving.

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Camilla knew now that she could never love again, worse than this, she knew she could never love Horace.

It was the very nobility of her nature that prevented her from ever dreaming that Acton had read or suppressed her letters; and still less, if less be conceivable, that his graphic account of his conversation with Horace was but a heartless forgery.

Such diabolical actions were quite beyond the farthest horizon of her ideas of evil. Accordingly she could but tell herself, with passionate shame, nay rage, that Horace was neither a lover, gentleman, nor man. A far less proud girl would have done as she did, torn him contemptuously from her breast; but when Camilla had accomplished this act, she found she had torn her own heart out too. Her young love had taken too deep root.

And then she knew that she must die!

Probably none of us can taste the very dregs of wretchedness without visions more or less distinct of self-destruction flitting through our minds; but though Camilla feared at first she might have sore temptation on this score, it was not long before the hideous spectre was laid to rise no more.

The reasons of this are twofold.

She had too much faith!

She felt her natural end so near!

But although she was dying literally of a broken heart, it must not be supposed that her sufferings were to compare to what they would have been, if, say, she had known even a part of the truth without the power of communicating it to Brudenell.

If he had already married Lady Susan, and she had then learnt how matters really stood, there can be little doubt but what her lot had been more full of sharp thorns, although perhaps less bitter in that she could also love him.

But in such a case, each day of her life must have been fraught with most racking and exhaustive paroxysms of wildest hopes and fears, and her love put back once more in her heart had burnt there like red hot iron.

Even then it is true nothing criminal would have entered her mind—no, not so much as in the form of a vague temptation—crime and Camilla were not made for one another, or rather she would always have preferred any amount of self-sacrifice, to staining her pure soul with grievous sin. All the same she would soon have worn herself to death by the violence of her emotion, and notably by her execration of the perfidy, the unspeakable blackness of her false friend Cyril Acton.

As it was she only felt herself each day becoming more numbed. She was perishing as it were less from feeling than the want of it, and had settled down half voluntarily into a peaceful and monotonous state of ossification. Her laugh was never heard, and her former capricious temper entirely gone. She had become a woman but to die, all trace of the child was gone for ever. Still

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she talked, but what changed talk! The newspapers and magazines were read by her with great thoroughness and few distractions, and the driest facts of politics, art, and even science, were subjects of her lengthy and apparently interested discourse with the few whom in the deserted country side she could find to listen to her. The explanation to this was not difficult to seek.

"Why," she asked herself, "should I inflict my indifference to all things upon those who have done me no wrong?"

And as it was as easy to get up a fictitious interest for one thing as another, she selected at random the first that came to hand, often to the great surprise of the uninitiated.

Lady Prendergast alone read the ghastly riddle aright. We have seen how great was the maternal love, but that it always failed to bend her when brought into conflict with determination to stand between Camilla and Cave Harding. To her uncompromising mind this attitude was the strongest expression of her love. The more she told herself how much she idolised her grandchild, so in exact proportion she felt she must diligently save her from her prodigal parent.

Doubtless she was honest in her belief, but doubtless also her feelings towards her son-in-law included a liberal surplus of resentment on his own account, which to her conscience, this well-meaning woman lumped in, as it were, with the former motive almost without knowing it.

For which of us are without tremendous prejudices, and which of us will own to being prejudiced at all.

But what love could not do in this particular instance, pity and terror had gone far to accomplish.

Little Dr. McFinn, who, like so many men, was no fool in his profession, although a considerable one out of it, had first to be consulted, and he at once privately assured the old lady that he considered the case very grave; at the same time candidly confessed himself puzzled as to diagnosis and consequently as to treatment.

He tried tonics with no effect, and thereupon urged Lady Prendergast to procure other advice from Birmingham or London. She did both, and a consultation was held at Silvermead much against Camilla's wishes.

Strange as it may seem, her sense of humour was not a little tickled by these grave men gravely arguing on the possibility of effecting the impossible.

"There was depression," they said, "great depression of the whole system, especially the nervous system." They enquired whether the interesting invalid was suffering from any recent shock, grief or trouble, and on being candidly informed that she was, the learned men looked triumphant, and said it was that.

Perhaps it was scarcely necessary to be an eminent medical man with no end of initials after his name to guess so much!

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The great Londoner enquired what the treatment had hitherto been, and on hearing that it was tonics said that then no tonics should be given in future. He by no means wished to insinuate, he added, that his friend Dr. McFinn had been injudicious in prescribing them, but for the present, at any rate, they should be stopped. After this dictum, the other saving light deemed it imperative for the honour of Birmingham to say something, but it was not so easy.

Presently, however, he asked whether the young lady had not been long resident at Silvermead, and on being told that she had lived there for the last twelvemonths, he delivered himself of the deep conviction that an immediate change of air would do no harm and might possibly do good. He was so delighted at finding this to say, and also that neither of his colleagues had happened to say it first, that he quite brightened up, and took to rubbing his hands.

Yet they were clever men all three, and if they played the ungrateful part of wiseacres on this occasion, it is only the fate of all who are highly paid for fulfilling formalities on the strength of their well-earned reputation, when there is really nothing to be done.

They had the true doctor's eye and doctor's instinct, even if the case baffled their technical skill, and they informed Lady Prendergast, after Camilla left the room, that they feared the state of the young patient was a very grave one.

After that the two celebrated *confrères* withdrew with becoming professional gloom, each a richer man by fifty pounds, minus his railway fare.

The fond grandmother felt that modicum of comfort which springs from a sense of having done the best in one's power; and that was all she had to counterbalance her great alarm, her absorbing grief.

Was she then to behold this bright child of promise, this one earthly thing she loved, fade and die in her early bloom, and sink before her into a premature grave?

From the first this valiant old woman had smarted under the sense of insult as indignantly as any young soldier sensitively jealous of his honour.

Just as Camilla had herself not bowed to her doom without making a desperate effort to right her destinies, so, also Lady Prendergast, on seeing how threatening were the effects of suffering on her beloved child, indulged in the wildest schemes for snatching her from the advancing hand of Death. Vague and impracticable as these schemes at first were, they gradually acquired shape and consistency in the yet vigorous old dame, and she rightly judged that if any heroic measure was to be adopted, it lay in the direction of Sir Howard Brudenell, and she at length determined to write to him. This step being decided, she took a full week carefully to deliberate upon its exact purport and expression.

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When completed, it covered two sheets of closely written letter paper--the old letter paper nearly square, which Lady Prendergast still affected on all important occasions.

This missive, ponderously sealed, was actually in the post-box of the great hall, when a visit from Miss Laffinch, whom the De Basles had at length summoned courage to *congédier* after positively drawing lots with each other as to who was to take the female bull by the horns,—a visit from the venomous one announced to her the fact, for once true, that Horace's marriage with Lady Susan Graye was publicly given out, and would certainly be in the *Morning Post* the following day.

Chapter XXVI.

"Only fancy," said Miss Laffinch, "your not having heard it, my dear. The know-nothingness of the country does strike one so on coming fresh from London. Oh, town is delightful, simply delightful."

"Ah, I heard the season was proving very gay."

"A carnival—a real carnival. I could hardly tear myself away. The dear De Basles, they implored me to remain; but I had only been asked for a week, and I allowed myself to be pressed for another—but delicacy, you know—delicacy."

"Of course," said the hostess, drily, for she knew Miss Laffinch well.

"Dear Sir Howard is delighted—quite radiant, you would think it was his own marriage. I told him, oh, I told him he ought to follow his nephew's example, and marry himself, hee, hee, hee!"

"I—I will tell my grand-daughter you are here, excuse me a moment," said Lady Prendergast, rising and leaving the room. As she knew nothing of Camilla's secret correspondence with Acton, she little dreamed that this news of the false one's betrothal was already quite old to the girl; and she dreaded her hearing it suddenly from Miss Laffinch, as she might do, should she chance to enter the drawing-room during her visit. The old lady found Camilla lying on the sofa in her little boudoir, and reading one of her favourite dry books.

Lady Prendergast had deemed it best not to inform her of the letter she had so laboriously penned to Sir Howard, and which was now in her pocket, she having taken it from the post-box on her passage through the hall.

"Miss Laffinch is here," she began, "if you think her gossip would amuse you, perhaps you would like to come down."

"You know, gran'ma dear, I do not like her."

"Well, as to that, who does? But you see too few people; Dr. McFinn says so."

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"If you would like me to come down I will certainly," and she prepared to rise.

"One moment," said the old lady, herself sitting down. "My chief object in coming up was to tell you that Miss Laffinch arrives from London and——"

"Yes."

"And professes to bring a piece of news which——"

"Yes, gran'ma."

"Which I fear might agitate and afflict you; and which I was determined should at all events be broken to you gently."

"I know, dear; you mean Mr. Brudenell's marriage."

"His announced engagement, yes; but how did you know?"

"There is no mystery in that," said Camilla, with a calm smile; "I saw it in the *Morning Post* to-day. I thought you always read the gay news so carefully."

"I—I was unusually busy," replied the old lady, slightly confused at the thought of her now wasted letter. "I trust, darling, it has not upset you sadly—made you worse?"

"Gran'ma," said the girl, putting her feet to the ground and sitting up, "why will you not believe what I tell you so often? I have ceased to care what Mr. Brudenell does, for I have ceased to love him."

"Then why are you ill?"

"If I am ill it is because he has proved himself so utterly unworthy; but, since he has done so, if I have any feeling for him at all, it is one of supreme contempt. Were I to meet him it would be with no other emotion."

"Yet you say you will never love again."

"I never can."

"But, why if——?"

"I could not tell you, I do not know, I only feel that I am like that. Still I am sorry for this news, but only on account of the woman he marries. I have seen enough of Lady Susan to be fond of her in a way, and I feel convinced she will be miserable—for he is a villain."

This was spoken with unwonted animation, and a faint flush mounted to the pallid brow.

"'Villain' is a strong term."

"Not too strong. He is marrying her for her money, and she does not know it. Oh, it would be a charity to tell her!"

"My child, what a wild thought; may he not admire her? She is very beautiful."

"No, no, it is not that!" said the girl, almost passionately. She was all this time looking straight before her, as if she saw things that were happening far away.

"But why not?" asked her ladyship.

"No, gran'ma; because he admires *me*."

There was such an utter absence of vanity or satisfaction in the

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way poor Camilla said this, that her listener had no inclination to smile.

"Oh, he is not stupid at all," pursued the girl; "a clumsy man would have written, called, said a hundred things, which, however carefully worded, would only have come to this—

"'I find I can do better for myself, so I break with you.' Mr. Brudenell has at least the sense to spare us the mockery of polite forms, of false regrets. He says nothing, but expresses what he means in pantomime. He *acts* out his part, and marries Lord Caulfield's heiress."

It was a relief to the aged woman to see Camilla throw off her languor, her stolidity for once, even although it was but too patent how morbid the brightness, how evanescent the spark of interest and animation which this talk about Brudenell's marriage had galvanized her into.

The two now joined the old maid downstairs. The girl knew Miss Laffinch to be one of the happily few who rather hate every one in the world more or less, and honour a large number with a special hatred.

Miss Harding was rather proud of being especially odious to the spinster, not that she had ever sought that distinction, and was not a little amused at it.

Anything like a true joy—a worldly joy that is, for she had many spiritual ones still left to her, every little passing incident that amused her was at this time quite prized by the poor little girl.

She knew, on entering the drawing-room, that her flush and excitement became her, and would therefore be highly annoying to the amiable visitor.

Like nearly all false people, Miss Laffinch habitually exaggerated the gullability of her friends. She was a clever woman in some things, but stupid in this.

"Ah, dearest child," she said, trying to embrace her, but Camilla stopped her by a double handshake, "how good of you to come down, but you are always so sweet."

"And so kind of you to call, we see so few people."

"Come now, let me look at you. Everybody told me you had been so ill. Quite a resurrection I declare."

"Oh, yes, I feel well enough just now. And so you have brought us all the news. You are always as good as a newspaper."

"You mean about Lady Susan Graye?"

"Oh dear no, I read that in the *Post* hours ago."

Miss Laffinch knew perfectly well it was in the paper, but finding Lady Prendergast happened not to have read it, she thought to make a point—"to score one" as she put it to herself—by concealing the fact.

"Oh," she said, colouring, "I haven't seen a paper to-day."

She was tingling to turn the event to the torture of Camilla,

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but dreaded "having her nose snapped off" again as she had called to Sir Howard the lesson Miss Harding had administered to her impudence. She thought, however, that she would try cautiously.

They were now having tea near the open window.

Tea always accentuated Miss Laffinch's bad points, but to be sure it seemed as if most things did that. After a couple of cups and half a muffin or so, she said:

"Ah, well, ah well! We never know what is for the best! Now, even, my dear, if he had married you——"

It is impossible on paper to convey the faintest idea of the way, the quiet, simple, yet terrifying way, in which Camilla turned upon her, and merely said:

"Eh?"

It meant: "Now then, are you going to begin again? Mind, you are still in time to swallow your words, but dare to finish them and out of that door you go for ever."

The speaker, like the true coward she was, grew instantly abject.

"All I mean—pray let me finish my sentence, dearest child—I misexpress myself——"

"You do," said Camilla, smiling carelessly, as she fed Rolf with cake.

"Oh, you insolent little hussey!" thought the spinster, but she only said:

"I mean that if he had sought some—any less wealthy alliance—when I said you, I meant some girl who, like you, have charm, character, beauty——"

"Lady Susan has plenty of that," put in Camilla.

"Mere beauty, granted, but no one shall tell me she is the woman to bind a man's spirit to her own for long, to control such a man as that young——"

The girl could not have told why, but she did not choose to have the man whom she had ceased to love spoken of with contemptuous vulgarity by this caitiff tongue. It was enough to cast her eyes calmly on the speaker for the sentence to change its ending into—"Mr. Brudenell."

"And tell me," said Camilla, "how is Mr. Forbes? We heard he was so ill."

"Better. Oh, far better, quite convalescent. Such a strange thing. You know Sir Ewing Crofton has been attending him. Well, he had never seen him before, but has taken the strongest fancy to the young man—so unusual in a doctor isn't it? Well, Sir Crofton you know has a lovely place in Surrey, and nothing will do but he must carry young Forbes off there as soon as he could start, for Lady Crofton and his girls to nurse him."

"How very kind," said Lady Prendergast.

"Kind?" shrieked Laffinch, disdainfully, "positively indecent, I call it; they'll catch him for one of the Miss Croftons."

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"But he is so poor."

"Pah! With Lord Hammersley's interests they'll soon get him something; besides he is only two lives off the title; Crofton's a regular old fox—known him all my life."

"Why should he not do an act of simple kindness?" asked Camilla.

"Ah, you don't know the world. He says to himself that it will please the Hammersleys, and especially young Acton; that alone makes it worth his while; if more come of it, why, all the better. Ha, ha, ha! Kindness indeed! Ah, my poor innocent!" and having thus delivered herself, she took advantage of the sentence to depart with an air of pitying superiority.

Chapter XXVII.

It was some days after the above little skirmish that the great medical consultation before recorded took place. Lady Prendergast had thus taken two important measures in vain; the other being that letter to Sir Howard which the news of his nephew's fresh engagement had, as it turned out most unfortunately, prevented her from sending.

Had it gone to its destination it would of course have made Sir Howard Brudenell very angry indeed, not with the writer, but with Horace. Nevertheless the baronet's strict sense of honour and of justice, to say nothing of his invariable gallantry, would have secured his sifting the case in its every phase, and in that process Camilla Harding could not have failed to come out not only spotless in the deluded young man's eyes, but all the more radiant and irresistible from having been so sadly misjudged, and because she had suffered therefrom well-nigh unto death. But if Providence always took such care of the innocent as to preserve them in this life from those miseries which the machinations of the unprincipled entail upon them, we should grow to look upon crime with only half the horror it deserves. It would become a mere temptation by which certain souls have to be tried, since their yielding or resisting would be then narrowed to the result of their own salvation or perdition. It is a wise dispensation indeed, that gives to sin a broader and yet more terrible aspect in the eyes of humanity. Only the impious ever suppose that Heaven has abandoned the innocent, because their temporal happiness is oft-times wrecked by the wicked.

Lady Prendergast, who was, as has been seen, completely in the dark, even more so than Camilla, as to the real facts of the case, very naturally concluded that if Horace Brudenell's marriage was proclaimed in the papers, no practical result could reward her interference, and she now shrank more than ever from a step which she had only brought herself to take with the utmost diffi-

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culty, at a sad sacrifice of pride, and from a desperate desire to snatch her beloved grandchild from despair, at any cost. It will surprise no one, therefore, to learn that after much less deliberation than she had expended on its concoction, the aged lady ultimately burned her letter to Sir Howard.

Some slight hope was revived in her by the truthful Camilla's assurance that she had quite ceased to love Horace Brudenell, nor did the old lady, in the girl's subsequent excitement in speaking of his marriage, find any contradiction of that assertion; this however, was amply attributable to pride, contempt, or a purely virtuous indignation.

Although Lady Prendergast of late years had never absented herself from her well beloved Silvermead, without experiencing what she termed a "wrench," and nourished an especial antipathy to all other spots of earth whatever, London alone excepted, she was not the woman to allow any such weakness to weigh with her for an instant in reference to the doctor's unanimous exhortation that Camilla should immediately have change of air.

Now, a doctor's change of air, I believe, never means London. In fact, the term usually implies some place where there is a good deal of air and nothing else. Their advice on this head indeed often seems to amount to their saying: "You have had too much amusement, too much excitement; I now wish you to be well bored for a space."

Brave old Lady Prendergast set herself then to mentally review various dreary English watering places, most of which rose before her mind's eye as a crescent with bathing machines; and a series of continental health spots, only more detestable in her opinion, because inhabited by foreigners.

It is true that Camilla flushed up and quite rose out of her habitual torpor on the occasion of her grandmother's visit to her boudoir, blooming for an hour again into her old health, or at least its semblance. But the next day came reaction with that benumbed state that had recently been growing upon the girl, and since then her gleams of liveliness had been terribly few and slight.

One morning when they were sitting together, Lady Prendergast said:

"Well, love, the doctors must be obeyed. I wish you to choose where we shall go."

"Go! Oh, gran'ma, you do not think of leaving Silvermead?"

"On the contrary, I have determined to do so."

Camilla came over and sat on a footstool at the old lady's feet.

"Gran'ma, it is no use."

"How so, child?" she asked, fondling her head—that silky, sunny hair, at least, had not changed.

"If I am ill I ought to be indulged, and I do not want to go away."

"Camilla, my darling, put yourself in my place. Whether I

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love you much or not at all, and you know very well which it is—how can I do anything but obey the absolute command of the doctors?"

"The doctors! Rubbish!" said the girl pettishly.

"This is childish. For shame, little one."

"We will not mind them."

"You are not wont to be such a baby. Think of the responsibility; it would be terrible."

"You mean if I were to die?" said Camilla, and she looked up frightened, as if a great secret had escaped her—a secret dreadful to the listener but not to her.

"Hush, hush, my child, I cannot bear it," and Lady Pendergast began silently to cry. This proud, hard woman was learning the habit of tears.

"Gran'ma," said the girl, now kneeling and kissing her, "I will not be childish, I will not talk any more nonsense. Listen."

"Well, love?"

"Here, at dear Silvermead, I may be sad—I—I often am—but I never feel dull, Oh, never."

"Well?"

"Well, if you take me away I shall be wretched, that I tell you. Oh, how shall I make you understand, I cannot explain to myself—if you take me away I know, I feel, I shall get worse so quick. Oh, gran'ma, if you drag me from Silvermead, you will never bring me back!"

The girl spoke with such deep conviction, with such fervour, that Lady Prendergast was staggered.

"My own Camilla, do not say such dreadful things! No doubt if you are so impressed with this idea——"

"Oh, I am, I am!"

"It may in itself alter the case. Why did you not yourself speak of this to the doctors, and hear what they would say?"

"It did not occur to me then. When they left I took it for granted we should obey them and go away, and it was only afterwards I came to feel I could not leave Silvermead."

"Well, well, I will do nothing rashly, I will reflect, consult Dr. McFinn and——"

Here a servant entered with a letter for her ladyship. It bore no stamp and the man said an answer was waited for.

"Who brought this?" she said, rather severely, after adjusting her glasses, and glancing at the superscription.

"A servant, my lady."

"Very well. I will ring presently," and the man retired.

Camilla had already recognised the hand, and with considerable surprise.

She now strolled to the other side of the room.

When her relative had carefully perused the letter in silence, she said:

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"Camilla, this is from an old friend of yours—Mr. Acton."

"And what does he say?"

"Read, dear, for yourself."

Camilla of course obeyed. The contents were as follows:

"MY DEAR LADY PRENDERGAST,—

"You will no doubt be surprised to find that I am back again so soon in your vicinity. Somehow or other, I found myself getting quite out of health and spirits in hot, crowded London, and our friend Mr. De Basle has persuaded me to come down and catch some of his famous trout. I am leading a highly Arcadian existence at a farmhouse near the stream, getting up at four in the morning, instead of going to bed at that hour, as I have generally been doing lately.

"Now, I know that when I was last here appearances were against me; and you deemed it necessary, in pursuance of certain views to which I need not further allude, to ask me to discontinue my visits, and to insist upon my holding no intercourse with Miss Harding.

"I write this letter to ask you to remove these restrictions, on condition of my making a solemn engagement which, when you urged it upon me before, I did not feel justified in entering into. My friendship *for others* did not then allow it. I am now ready to give my *word of honour* to be *no one's* ambassador, or intermediary, in any sense whatever. May I come and pay you my respects? A verbal 'yes' by bearer will bring me over this afternoon.

"Believe me,

"Sincerely yours,

"CYRIL ACTON."

"Well, gran'ma," said the girl, "you will believe him of course."

"I hardly know what to say. Tell me, did you know of this?"

"Of what?"

"Of Mr. Acton being down here, of his intention of writing this letter?" There was a slight returning of harshness as the late tearful woman put these questions.

"Oh, no, gran'ma—on my honour!"

"That will do, so far. Now, on your side, if I allow him to come, will you—will you promise to make no use of him, to which I should object? you know what I mean."

"I shall ask him if he has seen my papa, and if he is well," said Camilla, blushing as if a lover were in the case.

"Hum!" said the other, reflectively. "And that is all?"

"Oh, yes, gran'ma, I will swear it, if it is not wicked."

"No, your promise will do. And tell me, would you like to see your friend Mr. Acton?"

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"Oh, yes, that I should," exclaimed the girl with heartiness.

"Very well, sit down and write."

And she reflected: "Girls are such unaccountable things that I may be mistaken in this one. Her old friend and playmate may amuse, or at least distract her. She may even in time grow to—who knows?"

"Well, gran'ma?" asked Camilla who sat ready, pen in hand.

"Just say, dear—

"Silvermead.
"June 20th, 188—.

"DEAR MR. ACTON,—

"Can you not dine with us to-day at half-past seven? Do if you can. At any rate I shall be very happy to see you on the understanding you propose.

"I remain,
"Truly yours,
"ELIZABETH PRENDERGAST."

"That will do, Camilla."

"But supposing he accepts, must he send a man all the way back here to say so?"

"You are right and show more thought than usual, child. Add a postscript then."

"Yes, gran'ma!"

"Do not, pray, think it requisite to answer about dinner."

Then Camilla folded the note and rang the bell, saying:

"He knows my hand, but that does not matter."

"On the contrary, my dear. He will thus see that you know as he does, on what terms I allow of your meeting."

And so the letter was sent to Acton who awaited it with an anxiety he had tried hard to conceal in the sought for careless wording of his note. The invitation to dine at Silvermead that very day surpassed all his expectations and made him feel more buoyant and sanguine than he had done for many a long day.

The fact, too, that Camilla had been deputed to pen the missive added wildly to his joy.

So it was peace was it? A thousand times the better; but this wily diplomatist had come down equally prepared for war. With no respect for honour himself, he undervalued the effect of an appeal to it in influencing others, and was positively rather taken aback although delightfully so by the redoubtable Lady Prendergast's ready acceptance of his word. Had his former alliance with Cave Harding still rendered him incapable of forcing the siege of Silvermead, Cyril Acton was armed with signed authority from this worthy to entice Miss Harding into unlimited rebellion and disobedience to her grandmother, and into clandestine meetings with Cyril. They even included powers for his bringing her bodily away, and straight unto the paternal breast, in the event of certain speculations, now on the very eve, Mr. Harding hoped and

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trusted, of a triumphant issue coming off without any disastrous hitch.

As for the fishing of which he talked so much, it was a pastime rather distasteful to Cyril Acton than otherwise.

He was driven now into a certain pursuit of it by sheer force of circumstances, but he never sallied forth, rod in hand, without some book in his pocket from which he hoped to learn still better than he knew already how to outwit his fellow men. Yes—man was the prey upon whom he impiously deemed himself framed to war. It happened to be the season of the May-fly, when the worst angler can speedily catch enough fish to make a show on returning home by the aid of that yellow fraud, that bait almost poaching in its short-lived deadliness; and so much accomplished, Cyril granted the poor trout an unhoped for respite in which, it is needless to say, that tenderness for their lives held no share.

The beauties of the landscape—so dear to his poor cousin Jack—were as naught to this hard young man, because they found no reflex of their own purity, and no field for their sweet sermons within his false and hollow breast.

He owned himself, and with pride even, "There are few things, indeed I care for, but those few I love desperately."

To-day, he pined and burned to see Camilla.

(To be continued.)

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LIKE CURES LIKE.

A HOMŒOPATHIC STORY.

THERE was not a single soul in cantonment, from Lord Algernon Beaumonde, commanding the Queen's Lancers, down to Ram Sing, their *Cheestie* or water-carrier, who ever had a good word to say for Lieutenant-Colonel Brande, the Adjutant-General of our large division in India: quite the contrary. All sorts and conditions of men detested him too too utterly, and would willingly have given up six months' pay and double latta to have seen him removed from our midst to Gualior, Aden, the Andaman Islands, or any other of those delectable stations where the European is and suffers. For be it known that Brande, although a distinguished soldier, a C.B., and a many medallist, was a distinguished and fiery-tempered martinet as well, and that his angry passions, always simmering, boiled over, when, so to speak, the tiniest shaving was added to the combustion. Put him out ever so infinitesimally, and by Jove you caught it! With Mr Ram Sing and his numerous *confrères* the "catching" took the shape of sticks, closed fists, booted feet, or the handiest and heaviest of missiles applied to his nude person; but with us others, of a social scale above the Rams Sings, and upon whom these species of battering-rams—pardon the bad pun—would have been risky, severe "wiggings" and incessant "naggins" were the Colonel's alternatives. But besides this the A. G. was uncertain, and of all abominable military failings that same incertitude is the high top gallant of them—you never know your man. Sometimes, for instance, meeting you he would say, "Ah, my dear fellow, how fares it? have not seen you for ages; look us up. Mrs. B. will be delighted if you call, and Violet and Beryl have got some new songs they would like you to try. Come to tiffin on Tuesday." But perhaps on that very day, coming across you again, he would angrily howl out, "Dash it all, Major Sparkles, what on earth do you mean, sir, by wearing a couple of feet of watch chain, and a handful of charms, outside your patrol jacket? Confound it, man, are you not old enough to know that the Duke has forbidden it? Inside with them; don't you hear me? put them inside, out of sight, and never let me have to notice this again." And then when division orders appeared that same evening we would read, "1. The

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attention of officers is called to Para. No. 1,000 of the Dress Regulations, prohibiting, etc., etc., etc. 2. Major Sparkles, Staff Corps, is appointed President of the Permanent Committee on Old Casks and Barrels, to assemble daily at the Commissariat office at noon. By order of the Major-General commanding. Signed, Rufus Pyro Brande, A.G."

I have said that one and all of us loved not Brande, and I might have added that he meted out to us generally the same measure of affection. But there was one section of the officers serving with him which had his especial averseness, and upon which, whenever he got the opportunity, he would be down hot and strong. This was the Medical Department; let a doctor fall into the clutches of Fra Diavolo, as Brande was nicknamed, and woe betide that unfortunate Sawbones; he caught it morally, nearly as bad as did Ram Sing physically. *Per contra*, however, it was whispered, that when the Medico's turn came, and the Fra got into the sick report—

> "As where's that *Indian flesh*, whereinto *liver*
> Sometimes intrudes not,"

his, the Medico's, right hand forgot not its cunning, and the most villanous of pills and potions were sent down Brande's throat. "He had trod upon the worm, it turned and stung him."

Now it so happened, that, at the time of my story, I, Charles Bullen, Staff Surgeon-Major, was Diavolo's pet abomination, and, if the truth must be told on my part, he mine; and how it had come about that we held such a very nice amiable *tu-quoque* feeling towards each other was on this wise: I had disputed to the death his military authority upon a certain purely professional point, had gained the day, and had, so to say, sent him away with his tail between his legs, the dear good-natured general before whom I had been hauled up, observing, as he decided in my favour, "Don't meddle with physic, Brande, it can sometimes be made very nasty for a fellow, especially when it is compounded of bitter but wholesome drugs." Well, he scored one against me for this, and I knew it; but as our duties never clashed, why, we went the even tenor of our ways, each of us "worrying the lives out of the men," as the recognised wit of the station put it. Then one day came the Adjutant-General's opportunity to pay me off, and he did so *con amore*, or rather *con furore*.

The vexed question of the relative rank and status of the Army Medical Officers was then greatly exercising the military mind. Some of the old fogies contended that the soldier-doctor ever had been a *nobody* in the service, and a nobody he ought to remain, *seculo seculorum*, while others—the younger and more liberally disposed authorities—urged that he should nowadays be made a *somebody*, and soothed and humoured, for putting aside the lights of the age, could he not your quietus make with one of his

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mere bodkins, or compel you to cross the Stygian ferry in a common card pill-box? Brande was one of the old school—that goes without saying—and his cry was *à bas*—to the very lowest depths *à bas*, the assumptive doctors. So seeing me upon a certain occasion paraded on horseback, in all the pride, pomp, and circumstance of holsters, saddle-cloth, chain-bridle, etc.—to be mounted or not to be mounted on duty was one of the most disputed points—he "dashed his buttons" and "his wig," "confounded it all," "wondered, he did, at my assurance," and ended by instructing me now and always to appear when I was wanted, on foot, and not on a d—d charger with the unnecessary and out-of-place appointments of a combatant.

This of course riled me considerable; so did the good-natured, but rather hard hits of my brother officers. Like pugilists with the gloves on, they did not intend to hurt, but nevertheless they did. However, I took all their *plaisanteries* in good humour, told them to bide a wee, and I would be even with the Fra, that—

"There's a good time coming, boys, wait a little longer,"

and that I was on the *qui vive* for my opportunity. Presently it came.

One hot day in May, I was writing in my bungalow with its doors and windows closed, to keep out the dry, scorching wind, kuskus tatties wetted, thermantidotes and punkahs in full play, when enters my swell Khitmighar, and says, in roundabout Baboo English.

"My Master—the Doctor Saab!—there has come but this second of the hour into our compound a camel-orderly, who notices to me that the Colonel Brande Saab, him whom the Honourable The Commander-in-Chief has posted as Adjutant-General over us here, desireth much to have visit from my master, the Hakeem Bullen; for there has occurred, by Seevah the Destroyer's will, a tamasha at same Brande's bungalow which needeth much a doctor's hand."

"What?—where?"—I asked.

"I know not," replied my man, "beyond what I have already imparted to the Saab."

"Chit (letter) got?"

"Not got, Sar; by word of mouth only doth the son of Shitan, the camel-orderly, bring the command."

"Then tell him to jao (go) and fetch a note; or stay, send the fellow with the message to Colonel Brande's own hakeem, the gentleman they facetiously call the staff doctor, down in the native lines."

But while this conversation was going on, the tatties at one of the openings were roughly pushed aside, and there ran in Brande *in propria persona*. *Quantum mutatus ab illo*, how changed from that Achilles of an authority who had driven me off parade but a few weeks before. He was dressed in the within-doors loose *deshabille* of the hot season, to wit, baggy pyjamas of cotton cloth of a loud striped

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pattern, and a short blouse or jacket to match. No socks were on his feet, which were thrust into a pair of yellow coloured slippers, manufactured by a *chuckler* (shoemaker) in the bazaar, and highly odoriferous of badly tanned leather. His brawny neck was without collar or tie, and his head was covered with the biggest and oldest of sola topees in cantonment.

The perspiration flowed in streams down his face, and he was out of breath and panting, for he had rushed in the broiling noonday sun a considerable distance from his house to mine. Again I say *Quantum mutatus ab illo*, what a difference from the Fra Diavolo we knew and feared.

"God bless me, Colonel!" I exclaimed, "what—'s up?"

He could give no answer, so exhausted was he.

"Sam," I said, "B and S iced—plenty cold, for Fr—— Colonel Brande, I mean."

The refreshing stimulus was brought, was for one instant bubbling in his hand, and in another was hidden from the sight of all men. Fame gave the A. G. credit for being partial to B's and S's—iced or otherwise.

"Well! what is it?" I repeated.

"Old Bullen, my dear, good fellow—"

The devil can quote Scripture for his purpose thought I—but I kept silence.

"Come to Hades——"

Hades was the name we had christened Brande's bungalow; he knew well enough that it was so called, but the sobriquet slipped out of his mouth inadvertently.

"Come with me. There has been a frightful occurrence at home."

"What?"

"*I have killed my syce*" (groom).

"Ph-e-w!—the deuce you have."

"Yes! indeed, I fear so—I was sitting in my verandah reading, when hearing a loud neighing and the sound of horses' hoofs in the stable, I looked out. There was that scoundrel—no, no!—not scoundrel!—impetuous but excellent Mootoo, licking my favourite Arab, Suliman. You know the horse, don't you? Saw him run at the races—cost me a pot of money."

"Indeed!" I said, "I thought that he was an old screw, cast from the Lancers, and sold at auction for two-fifteen British money? Yes! I saw him run, or rather try to run for the Rajah's cup at the meet; distanced, if I remember rightly?"

"What the devil do you mean, sir?"

The old leaven was evidently rising within the Adjutant-General's breast, but, with a struggle, he repressed it.

"Well, Bullen, as I said before I saw Mootoo, the villain—Ah, me! why do I call the man villain, when perhaps he is in Vishnu's bosom at this very moment—thrashing the horse. In my rage

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and precipitation—I am not generally easily moved as all know—I seized a Penang lawyer——"

"Who?"

"A thick cane, so forensically called you know, and rushed out. Without an idea of consequences, I dealt the man, one, two heavy blows, and down he fell, yelled twice, kicked out spasmodically, then stiffened himself, and lay gasping for breath, in which terrible condition I left him but now. And so I want you, Bullen, you're the cleverest doctor in the division, to come with me, and see what can be done. If any human means can save him, those means are with you. You will help me?—won't you?"

"Signior Brande," said I, *à la* Shylock, "many a time, and once in particular, on the parade ground, have you rated, or rather disrated me, about my horse, my spurs, and horse equipments, and I have borne it with a patient shrug, for sufferance is the badge of all the doctor tribe. You've called me civilian, non-combatant, assuming rank to which I had no title, and, so to speak, spitting upon my medico-military gaberdine. Well, then, it now appears you need my help; you come to me and say, 'Bullen, dear friend, oh, save my syce's life;' you that did void your anger on my '*mount*,' and made me foot it like a marching sub. However, let that pass——"

"God bless you! Come along."

"No! not through the burning sun, and walking. I won't risk *coup de soleil* for all the syces in the land, much less for one. Get me a carriage and I will accompany you. If Mootoo be dead, ten minutes more or less won't make much difference for the post-mortem examination."

But even while I was speaking Brande's gharry drove up.

Now I felt pretty sure that, as regarded Mr. Mootoo, things were not as bad as Fra Diavolo supposed them to be. I had had a tolerably lengthy acquaintance with niggers of sorts, I had seen and known them in many of their habitats, and I was thoroughly well aware that they were subtle dabs in the art of humbug, pulling long faces upon merest trifles, and metamorphosing scratches into deep and serious wounds. But still I could not help taking a rise out of the affrighted gentleman, pandering to his fears, and piling up his agony. Fate had put him into my hands, and I felt much indebted to fate. So as we were driving together in the carriage, on our way to Hades, I asked:

"Where did you hit the syce?"

"Oh, Bullen!" he answered, "on the sides, one blow right, the other left."

"You could not possibly have selected worse places in the nigger-form-divine. These curry-eaters and mango-brandy drinkers have one and all got either enlarged livers, or hypertrophied spleens; strike them upon one or the other, and forthwith

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you break it like an over-ripe melon. I should not be at all surprised if your Penang pleader has ruptured both organs. By the powers, if you have settled Mootoo's hash, and sent him with all his imperfections on his head into Abraham's—I mean Vishnu's bosom—you will excuse my saying so—but won't there be a row! First a coroner's inquest; next an appearance for you to put in before the cantonment magistrate; after that bail with heavy securities; then transfer of the case to the Supreme Court of Judicature in Calcutta; employment of swell advocates, costing you hundreds of gold mohurs, in the way of retainers, refreshers, and other legal fees—lastly the trial and verdict—manslaughter certainly—maybe wilful murder, and Mr. Marwood's representative in Fort William to the fore. But I see, this hath a little dashed your spirits, so I won't speculate more on consequences."

Brande could hardly have answered with Othello, "Not a jot, not a jot," for he was deadly pale, and trembling like an aspen leaf.

"You will stand by me, Bullen?"

"How? If I am summoned as a medical witness, I must tell truth, and shame the devil—the Fra Diavolo devil," I muttered between my teeth.

By this time we had arrived at the bungalow. In the portico stood Mrs. Brande weeping and wringing her hands; by her side were her daughters Violet and Beryl going through the same performances. If one wanted to realise the very antipodes of human nature, one had only to look upon the ladies and the lord and master of this homestead. Brande was a large, red-faced, red-haired man, Mrs. B. and her offspring were thin, delicate, flaxen-hair women, thoroughly washed out as to complexion, limp and draggled. Brande, as I have shown, was satanic in disposition, facile with canes, boot leather, and so on; poor Mrs. B. was meek, mild, and gentle as an angel, and her girls followed suit; the three ladies had the counterfeit presentment of being "sat upon," as no doubt they were, by husband and father.

As I walked into the stable my eye fell upon the so-supposed dying syce. He was laying upon the *Kunka* floor of an empty stall, and about him were his womenkind, howling and beating their breasts after the manner of the eastern dame or damsel in sore affliction. Close by were his brethren, looking on with the stolid indifference of the eastern man and brother, whether in sorrow or in joy.

Pushing some of the lookers-on and howlers on one side, I came face to face with my patient, and saw with half an eye, that he was shamming and not cleverly either.

But not contented with ocular demonstration, I made a careful manual examination, and came to the conclusion that a more

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patent and decided Brummagem plant never nigger planted. So I made up my mind as to treatment.

Returning to the bungalow, I said a word or two to console the ladies, and then went into Brande's sanctum, where he was anxiously awaiting my report.

"Well! well! Bullen, how is it with Mootoo? Will he die?"

The thought came across me, shall I put the perturbed Fra out of his misery with the words "nothing," "no," or shall I tell "crammers," and keep him cat-like under my paw yet longer? I decided upon the latter course. Revenge is sweet to doctors deprived of their chargers. So I answered:

"It's by no means well; at present it's awfully bad. He is suffering from a recent attack of a disease endemic all over India, always assailing the black man, never the white, and called—Brande's acquaintance with Latin was nil—*Argumentum a bacculo.* So common is it among the coolie and horsekeeper races, that I do not think I ever met one of these men who had not had it, more or less, generally more than less. Sometimes, if trifling, an equally trifling exhibition of 'coppers' cures it, if grave, silver is had recourse to pacify the excited, aggrieved, and painful native system. Now your Penang lawyer has induced the affection, and a very serious one it is in Mootoo, whose life hangs on a thread, but should hang by a rope; though I think that I can prevent atropos from cutting it. I am not going to try the copper or silver treatment; there is a homœopathic practice which I think will answer sharper and better. As I rule I do not believe in Doctor Hahnemann, but in this case he will be useful, I am sure."

"Oh, try by all means, doctor, do anything to cure Mootoo's what-do-you-call-it, and wriggle me out of this dilemma into which I ought never to have put myself."

"Certainly not, manslaughter is by no means a nice reflection for any man; when it occurs professionally in your case or in mine in the line of duty, pooh! it is not worth a moment's consideration; both of us 'sleep the next night well, are free and happy,' but the conditions under which Mootoo's probable demise will be laid at your door, gathered to his fathers, for a two-penny half-penny old screw of a caster."

"What the dickens do you mean, sir?"

"Another intemperate word, Colonel, and I throw up the case."

"But your responsibility?"

"Pooh! nothing in comparison to yours. I have not killed the syce."

He groaned with anger and annoyance. Never before had one of the genus "Pill" so bearded him. Then singing out *Io triumphe* I left him and returned to my patient.

The haphazard at random observations I had thrown out, upon my previous visit to the syce, had produced the very effect I wanted upon that individual, he really imagined that I con-

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ceived him to be in *articulo mortis*. He was now playing his part more openly than ever; groaning, sighing, twisting, turning, rolling his eyes, opening his betel-stained mouth, gasping, sitting up, falling down—never though so as to hurt himself—and going through such a pantomime of tricks, that never dying man before, since Adam, performed.

"Oh! ah!" I said, "he is now much worse; if the medicine I am going to administer does not take effect, *chitta poché*, he will die."

"Uppah! my father! my mother! I know it," groaned out the arrant blackguard at my feet.

"Here some of you! take off his jacket and turban."

It was done, and Mootoo stood or rather lay in those short thin drill trousers, which horsekeepers are accustomed to wear in livery, and those only. The rest of his black body was *simplex munditiis*, bare as the back of my hand.

Rub his chest and sides with *this*. *This* was nothing more than some cocoanut oil, common in every stable. But your native has wonderful faith in friction with it.

"Now stand clear every one and give me room. The homœopathic experiment is now coming off, watch it."

The men scrambled upon the window ledges and other coigns of vantage; the women crouched down upon the grass and straw lying in heaps about.

Quick as lightning, I slipped the handle of a stout racing whip which I had taken from the Colonel's rack, and concealed up my sleeve, into the grasp of my palm, and presto!—swish! a sharp cut of it descended on the shoulders of the astonished Mootoo.

He was on his legs in an instant; no agile harlequin ever made such a splendid spring.

"Enna!—what's dis?—why for Saab lick sick man plenty too hard?"

"To cure you—you soor (pig), I'll repeat the dose: take that, you infernal humbug;" and lash number two followed close upon the heels of number one.

"Uppah! 'gain why master beat dead syce, I kill you sar this minute."

Then he made a feeble demonstration of fight, but the vigorous application of stroke three took that out of him, and he fled howling down the compound, cursing me, my relations, and friends, past, present, and to come. Arrived at the gate, he called out something that sounded like a summons for assault and battery, before the Cantonment magistrate, then took to his heels, his voice rousing the sleepy inmates of every house in the Staff and Cavalry lines he traversed.

And now I rejoined Brande, who, attracted by the noise, had come into the verandah just in time to see the man he had

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supposititiously killed flying like the wind through the sand and grass of the compound.

"Lord bless me!—what——"

"There, Colonel," said I, "look upon that! There's a case for the *Lancet*—there's a refutation that homœopathy is a medical delusion and a snare—there's a specimen that like cures like—'a hit, sir, a very palpable hit,' morally and physically—and something more—matter for a column of type in the *Englishman*, or *Hurkaru*, with the taking heading: 'How Colonel Pyro Brande killed his syce, and how Doctor Bullen brought him to life again.' It's as good as twenty-five rupees in my hand for the article."

"Dash it, sir, if you dare, I'll bring you to a court martial."

"We shall see. But one word more ere I take my leave. This is no case of ordinary medical attendance included in the pay and allowances of the medical officer. It is a special matter which you won't find noted either in the departmental or general instructions. So please send me, and soon, a cheque for rupees fifty as a trifling honorarium."

"I'll see you——"

"Good day—good day—a splendid case; it will make a noise in the Presidency, and bring my name before the Inspector-General of Hospitals. 'There is a tide in the affairs of men—' you know the rest—adieu! adieu! adieu! remember me."

I drove straight to the mess; the fellows were at tiffin. "The hour and the man," said I as I joined them. "I told you that the time would arrive when Fra Diavolo and yours truly would be quits. This very day it has come to pass." And I related the story.

In an hour or two it was all over the big cantonment, and in the evening, when everybody met everybody at the band stand, men, women, and even children had it pat.

Brande's fury knew no bounds, and when the belle of the station asked him saucily, might she send a wreath of jessamine and wax plant to adorn Mootoo's coffin, he actually anathematised that lovely dame.

On the following day I had to put in an appearance again before the General. He did not say much, he could not, the affair was so utterly ridiculous; but he warned me "to be more careful in future." But when I observed, "Your pardon, General; but I fancy that Colonel Brande needs that caution more than I do," he burst out laughing, and said I might go.

What took place between the chief and the A. G. after I left office I don't know; but we saw this memo in division orders, that night.

"Medical Officers having the relative rank of Field Officers are entitled to wear the appointments of their combatant grades, and when on parade to appear mounted on horseback. By order, etc., etc., etc."

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One word more and my story ends. Its incident took place in 186—; this is now the year of grace 1883—say in round numbers twenty years ago—but the cheque for five guineas has never been forthcoming—it never will be. Doctor's fees for cases equally successful as Mootoo's are often lost in oblivion.

H. L. C.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A SINGING CHAMBERMAID.

AN UNCOMFORTABLE CHRISTMAS

SOME two or three years ago I was engaged to play in the pantomime in a noted sporting town high up in the Midlands, a town noted alike for its hosiery and its fox-hunting proclivities. I had been in the company for some time—indeed, from the commencement of the season, though *that* only commenced at the end of October. I was well settled in my engagement, had capital lodgings, with the best of landladies, *one* girl in the company whom I liked *more* than awfully, and the usual tame cat, whose name, by-the-bye, was Frank (strange! how often tame cats *are* called Frank). The only drawback to my comfort was the manager and his wife, who were about *the* sourest people I ever met.

I heard the leading lady have an argument with him one morning at rehearsal, in the course of which she told him he had a face "like a bashed-in pantomime mask." Shocking of her, wasn't it? But it was true for all that, and mightily we all enjoyed it.

However, all this is nothing to do with my uncomfortable way of spending Christmas night. You must know that my dear mother lived at Bath, and it was my habit to get home, if only for a few hours, every Christmas Day when it wasn't rendered impossible by distance. This year we were to produce the pantomime on Christmas Eve, and I found if I could catch a train leaving Hosierston at 10.45 p.m. I could get to Bath early in the morning, spend a long day with my darling, and, starting about three the morning after Christmas, get to Hosierston in time for our morning performance at 2.30 on Boxing Day. Rather fatiguing, certainly, but I did not mind that if I could attain my object. I reckoned on getting a good sleep in the train both ways, and knew I must get an hour or two's sleep in Bath in view of the two performances (very hard work, let me tell you) for Boxing Day. To catch my train on Christmas Eve I should have scarcely any time to change my dress, and as I played a groom's part in the pantomime, I couldn't travel in any portion of the dress.

However, I determined to have a try for that train, as if I didn't catch that it would be useless to think of going at all.

So I ordered a cab to be waiting, telling Frank he must ride on the box if necessary, and make the man drive fast.

As soon as I was off the stage (oh! how I fumed at an encore the people *would* give me for a long dance and song) I rushed

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into my dressing-room, where I found my landlady—careful soul—with a jug of hot coffee and a packet of sandwiches, and, helped by the ready hands of the other girls, who knew where I was going, proceeded to pull off my somewhat tight stage dress (top boots "and things" take a deal of pulling off) and huddle on my travelling dress.

Before I could fasten my hooks and eyes, Frank's voice was heard at the door, "Time's up!" and, hastily jamming a hat down on my light curly wig, and tying on a veil to conceal my paint, I rushed downstairs and into the cab, followed by my landlady with the sandwiches. These she threw in at the window as the cab rattled off.

It had been snowing slightly and was rather slippery, but we went a good pace.

Arrived at the station, I flew to the train, Frank to the booking-office for my ticket, which he threw in at the window (*à la* sandwiches) as the train moved away.

Devoutly thankful to get off at all, I sat in my corner as quietly as possible, turning my face away from the light, fearing lest my "make up" should be detected and myself recognised, for our train was full in all classes, and I was very well known in Hosierston, where everyone goes "to t' pla-ay."

Presently, I felt, rather than saw, all eyes were directed to me, and soon a ponderous whisper reached me of, "Eh, it's t' little devil." Don't be shocked, please; they meant a *part* I'd been lately playing. It had gone very well because of some songs I sang in it. And a rejoinder of, "Eh, ha! it's t' Marsden lass."

It was exceedingly uncomfortable. There was I, sitting unwashed, in all my "war paint," the cynosure of all the eyes (save my own) in that very full compartment. However, I knew I must bear it, as if I changed the carriage the chances were it would be the same in another.

Station after station went by, and I began to feel sleepy and to want my supper, sandwiches not counting for much after a hard night's work—a first night, too, which is always worse.

Birmingham came, and there several of my Hosierston acquaintance got out. Others got in, though, who stared at my painted face and flaxen hair. I have very dark eyes and eyebrows; and, though very well on the stage, flaxen curls and thick black brows don't go well together in a railway carriage. Worcester! How late we are! When shall we get to Bath! One comfort, mother doesn't think I'm coming till late in the day, so she won't be waiting for me. How grubby I feel, and how these people do stare. Oh! for some warm water, and a cake of coal tar soap. Shall we ever get to Bath?

Gloucester at length, and by-and-by, *three hours late*, Bath, arriving at nine instead of six.

A cab soon took me home, and after a meeting I don't dare to

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think of now I've lost her, I got the much longed for *tub*. Then breakfast, and then a lie down on a sofa holding her dear hand, and asking and answering questions as fast as possible. We always had so much to say to each other, and now we had so short a time to say it in, for I found, as the trains were so overloaded with Christmas traffic, it would not do to trust to getting back on the following day, because of our day performance. The only train I could possibly trust to was one leaving at five Christmas afternoon—five, and I only got there at nine. Had there been one later in the evening it would have done, but being Christmas Day the trains were running as on Sundays, and consequently as inconveniently as possible.

I tore myself away at five, in the hurry and the grief at leaving her quite forgetting I had come without rugs or wraps of any kind, though I had been so cold coming down and had fully meant to have got some to go back with.

This time the train was very empty, and I got a compartment to myself.

Colder and colder it grew. The carriage was too badly lighted for me to be able to read, and I was indeed miserable. I looked at the houses we passed, thinking enviously how the people in those lighted rooms were probably enjoying themselves, and rather chuckling, I'm afraid, when I thought how ill they would probably be on the morrow.

Colder and yet colder, till I was fain to get up and stamp about the compartment, beguiling the time by trying to invent some new steps to put in my dance to-morrow. All in vain.

Then I tried lying down, and turning the skirt of my dress over my shoulder, tried to sleep.

It was much too cold for that, and I sat up shivering, miserable, and thinking what a row I should get into to-morrow, if I lost my voice, as I too probably should.

After what seemed to me a journey of some weeks' duration, we arrived at Birmingham, and I rushed to the refreshment rooms, thinking of hot coffee, only to find them closed, because it was Christmas.

I didn't say anything. Had I been a man I should—something forcible.

Another period of intense cold and misery, and then Hosierston.

"Now," think I, "a cab, and home to a big fire in my bedroom, and supper in my dressing-gown. And, as I had no bed last night, I'll stay in bed to-morrow till it's time to go to the theatre."

No cabs! because it was Christmas, and everyone enjoying his or herself.

I set out to walk.

Now, I am always a coward in the streets at night, and there generally happens to be some one in the company wherever I

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am, who is kind enough to walk to the door of my lodgings after performance. And here I was quite a mile-and-a-half away from my destination, between twelve and one o'clock in the morning. Still I had to go home, so I sallied forth—not bravely—but still, I went.

I found the snow of Christmas Eve (how long ago that seemed) had deepened and frozen hard, and was consequently very slippery. So, much to the upset of my dignity, I tumbled down —*twice!*

Fortunately for me the streets were very deserted, but, just as I was picking myself up for the second time, I heard voices I thought I knew. And there were our leading gentleman, and our Heavy Man seeing each other home after a (very evidently) jovial evening. I'm ashamed to confess I hid myself round a corner, till they were past. I felt such a thorough rogue and vagabond prowling about the streets at that hour of the morning, and I knew they would tell how they had found me and I should get horribly chaffed. Besides, they were so very merry, I didn't think they would be much protection to me.

After much slithering about (but no more falls) I reached my lodgings, which I found, as I thought I should, all dark, as I was not expected till the following morning. But Mrs. Webb was such a glorious landlady, I knew it would be only the work of a very few minutes to make me a good fire—for the kitchen fire was never let out, but always "banked up." I found a hard bit of snow and threw up at the bed-room window. No response! so I threw another. Still silence. Then I began to knock gently, for I didn't want to disturb the neighbours, and I had rather a fear that a policeman might come and tell me to "Move on," or else take me up for creating a disturbance. I knocked, and knocked for a long time, then I began to wish the before-dreaded policeman *would* make his appearance. But no! It might have been a city of the dead, for anything I saw or heard to the contrary.

At last, grown desperate, and rather vicious, I broke a pane of glass in that bed-room window, and when that failed, my courage did also, for I knew I was locked out, and I sat down on the door-step about as near "giving way" as ever I was in my life.

What could I do? My particular chum, Eva Mount Chapel, had gone to London to see her friends, or I could have got a bed, or at least a sofa at her lodgings. Frank was gone with her to *his* friends, or I might even have tried his landlady. Whilst as for the rest of the company, I didn't know even the names of the streets they lived in, so it was no use thinking of them. As for the cause of such an awful state of things I could only conjecture that my landlady, freed from the incubus of her lodger, had gone to spend Christmas with her mother, who lived a very short railway journey from Hosierston. What should I do? Not stay on the door-step, at all events. I was dreadfully tired and sleepy,

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and could hardly keep awake, and in that bitter cold—ugh!—I don't want to end that way, by any means.

I thought of the police station, I know an actor who once being unable at night to find his lodgings, went to the police station and begged a night's shelter. But then he was a man. No! I couldn't do that.

Then I thought of the railway station, and I resolved to go back there and sit in one of the waiting rooms till morning, "At any rate," I thought, "I shall be there to see the first train in, Mrs. Webb will be sure to come by the first train, because of having my rooms ready for me. How sorry she will be when she knows." Then I thought of my mother, and what she would feel if she knew my unhappy plight, and I became rather maudlin.

But back that wretched, slippery mile and a half I had to go, with the streets grimmer and more silent even than they were before. How thankful I should be now to see those very jovial actors.

Arrived at length (and very long it seemed) I found the station lights out all but two, and the waiting-rooms locked up. Whilst I was vainly endeavouring to open one of the waiting-room doors, a rough voice shouted, "What 'er yer about?" It was a porter, who took me for a burglar (and no wonder). When I tried to explain, he seemed incredulous, and I had to give him my name and full particulars. He knew my name well enough, and at last he unlocked the first-class waiting-room door and lighted the gas. On any other night of the year there would have been a fire, but now there was none. The porter told me, "Theer was a good un in that theer rum," but that "his mates was theer, and more would bee theer presently, and mebbe I would not like it." I didn't think I should, and told him I'd just sit where I was till the first train was in at half-past seven. I sat there. By-and-by the porter brought me a very rough and exceedingly dirty rug. But I was very glad indeed to get even that. So I rolled it round me and lay down on the hard and shiny sofa. I was afraid to go to sleep, yet could hardly keep myself awake, and had continually to get up and walk about the room to keep my eyes even half open. This in spite of the awful and almost incessant screaming kept up by passing trains (luggage, I think). At six the porter brought me some very nasty tea without milk or sugar, and in a tin can, but it was boiling, and so not to be despised. At half-past seven I stood on the platform (looking woe-begone enough) to see the first train come in. It arrived, but no Mrs. Webb; so at the suggestion of the porter, now got quite sympathetic and friendly, I resolved to go back to my lodgings, and induce one of the neighbours, or invoke the aid of the police if necessary, to effect an entrance at the back of the house. Feeling that unless I could get to bed for a few hours it would be impossible to get through our two performances (always a heavy tax on one's endurance).

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The people were beginning to open their houses, as I again slithered over the ground, but, being a manufacturing town, every one seemed to be taking advantage of its being Boxing Day to be later than usual.

Next door but one to my lodgings was a small beer-shop (Hosierston was jumbled up very queerly in the building), and there I resolved to appeal for help. A fat man in grimy shirt-sleeves was just opening the door when I got there, and to him I told my story (though I didn't think it necessary to tell him where I'd passed the night). "Couldn't mak un eear; whoy, they was theer last night, I reckon I'll wak um surely." So he brought out a very big stick and cudgelled and belaboured the door till sure enough voices were heard, and the door was opened by Mr. Webb in a state of undress. Reader! they had not been away, but having changed their bedroom from front to back of the house had not heard my assault on their window panes. Inexpressibly disgusted and feeling very *sold* I was put to bed, and, thanks to Mrs. Webb's judicious treatment, did *not* lose my voice, though it was some time before I got over the effects of my uncomfortable Christmas. "ABS."

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CONNIE.

CHAPTER I.

"AND so she is an intellectual young lady is she?"

"But oh, ye lords of ladies intellectual,
Inform us truly, have they not henpeck'd you all?"

Thus made answer Major Duncan to his younger brother, James Duncan, Esq., Lieut. in H.M. —th Reg. of Foot. James Duncan had, for the last ten minutes, been pouring into his brother's patient ears, an impassioned account of the virtues and beauty of a young lady, whose acquaintance he had that morning made. The brothers were smoking their after dinner cigars in the dining-room of Hardwicke Court, the bachelor home of Major Duncan; a fine old house, glorified by ivy outside and old oak inside; but which, for all its many attractions, had never been able to tempt the Major to permanently leave his soldier life. Its owner was nearly forty years of age, a quiet, suave, and generally silent man. His younger brother was of a very different character. James Duncan was one of those young men, not so very uncommon, in whose natures the wild beast and civilized and humanized elements, though both strong, are at perpetual war. For a long period in his life, the wild beast element had decidedly the best of it. He had excellent abilities, and a kind heart; but his other virtues, these being excepted, if they existed, were at any rate dormant. He had been six years in the army, and lately, but for occasional outbursts of his worst nature, had shown signs of becoming a fairly respectable member of society.

"But John," continued Jim, still full of his new acquaintance, "I have not told you how I made Miss Gurney's acquaintance."

"No," said the Major, with a decided yawn.

"Oh, the luckiest thing in the world. Coming home through the village, as I passed Abbotstone, I saw two dogs fighting inside the lodge, and the lodge woman and a girl trying to separate them. Of course I went to the rescue, lugged off a sheep-dog that was mauling a pug, and then took a look at the young lady; that look pleased me vastly, so I at once suggested that, as the pug seemed badly bitten (he wasn't by the way), I should take him up to our groom, who, I told her, was the best fellow in the world for doctoring dogs. The poor child seemed pleased, and

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of course accompanied her dog. In the course of our walk we became great friends. She told me they had taken Abbotstone for seven years, and, as far as I could make out, her father was a sort of city fellow."

"So in the course of half a mile's walk you discovered that the young lady was named Constance, though intellectual was modest and retiring, was something of an artist, had excellent taste, was of a good temper and cheerful disposition, and was not gushing; well, my boy, I congratulate you on your power of analysis."

"I did not tell you all that, John."

"That is about the sum of it. Well, you might do worse than marry a city man's daughter; by the way, did you find out if they were Hebrew?"

"Stop your chaff, old man; you quiet fellows, when you take to chaff, make as a rule a signal mess of it. Moreover, who ever spoke of marrying her?"

"Well, Jim," said his brother, more seriously, "when I hear a fellow who generally cares, I fear, for no woman who is not very fast, and whose good name is not at a great discount, praise a girl for being just the reverse of all this, I generally think that something serious is going to take place."

"Well, she is different from any other woman I admire, and that's a fact," said Jim.

"Well," said the Major, "we are wasting time that might be more profitably spent at billiards, eh?"

Jim seemed to dissent from this, but rose and followed his brother out of the room.

Chapter II.

"I think I ought to go and enquire for that pug," said Jim, next morning, after breakfast. "Will you come?"

"No, thanks," said the Major. "I appreciate your generosity in asking me, but Wilson is coming to look at the roof, and I must meet him."

"As you like. If there is a decent boat in the boathouse, I shall row down by the river; you know there is a backwater leading up to the bottom of Abbotstone gardens."

Jim Duncan did not add that Miss Gurney had informed him the day before of her intention of taking a sketch up that very backwater; it is therefore to be surmised that he did not grieve long or deeply at his brother's refusal to accompany him.

Reaching the boathouse, he seated himself in a dingy, and soon was dropping slowly down the river. Now that he was going to see her again, yesterday's meeting seemed almost like a dream to him, he half feared to find her changed to-day. Then he began to laugh at himself, as he thought what some of his lady friends

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would say, if he told them he had gone out of his way on a hot day to see a girl, whose chief charm was a certain childish simplicity and straightforwardness.

But now he had entered the backwater; Miss Gurney, if any faith was to be put in woman, ought to have been there or thereabouts. So Jim stopped and took a look round him. Yes, there she was, seated with her back to a willow, but not sketching at all, seemingly just dreaming. A slim figure in white, a kind, sweet face with brown eyes under a shady hat, masses of brown hair, and cheeks somewhat ruddy, a mouth inclined to pout, and eyes given to laughing, but which could look sad enough at times, such were the details of the picture which met Jim's gaze. He moored his boat and stepped up lightly through the deep grass. She had laid down her sketch and had been reading, but did not see Jim coming, so he stopped about ten yards from her. She made a vastly pretty picture as she sat there, so Jim stood still a minute to enjoy the picture, being an artist and voluptuary in his way. Suddenly Miss Gurney looked around and was aware of Jim standing near and regarding her contemplatively. Being surprised she made haste to state an obvious fact.

"Why it is you, Mr. Duncan," she said.

"No doubt about it," said Jim; then, feeling that some explanation of the situation was necessary, and forgetting all about the pug, he added, confusedly:

"I was sculling down the river, and it was awfully hot, so I got out to rest and get cool."

"Do you generally rest standing up in the middle of a field?" she said, with a smile.

"Well, anyhow, I will not do so any longer," said Jim, with recovered self-possession, and lay down on the grass at her feet.

"I have to thank you so much for your care for my dog; he is doing very well, he ought to be very much obliged to you."

"He need not flatter himself, if he had not been yours, I should not have troubled," said Jim, bluntly.

"Well, well, then I am very much obliged to you. See, I have done my sketch. I want your criticisms."

Jim took it up, and said:

"Ah! you paint boldly; most lady amateurs don't. You are quite right in only indicating the foreground. The distance wants more delicacy, and you have failed in the foliage of that aspen; though they are hard to paint, I will allow."

"Why, Mr. Duncan, you are not very gallant, but you are a good critic."

"Do you want me to flatter you?" he said, looking straight in her face. "Let me speak just the truth to you, to make sure that I can do it," he said, with a laugh. "One has to disguise the truth so much in speaking to most people, that I hardly know now the meaning of the word. Years ago," he went on slowly, "I had

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a dear old friend, and I used to think it not one of the least uses of friendship that we always told one another just what we thought of one another's deeds and words. But now events have removed him to the other side of the globe, and for years I have never spoken nor heard the truth," he said, somewhat bitterly.

"And have you never had another friend?" she asked.

"That depends how you estimate friendship. Perhaps you and I do not mean the same by the word."

"Read this," she said, passing him a book she had been reading, "and see if it is like your estimate of friendship."

What James Duncan read in it was this: "To talk and jest together, to do kind offices by turns, to read together honied books; to play the fool or be earnest together, to dissent at times without discontent, as a man might with his own self, and even with the seldomness of these dissentings to season our more frequent consentings; sometimes to teach, and sometimes to learn; long for the absent with impatience, and welcome the coming with joy. These and the like expressions proceeding out of the hearts of those that love and were loved again, by the countenance, the tongue, the eyes, and a thousand pleasing gestures, were so much fuel to melt our souls together, and out of many make but one." "This is love, not friendship," said Jim.

"No; friendship, the only love perhaps worth having," she said, smiling.

Jim remembered some words of Balzac, "*parler d'amour c'est faire l'amour;*" but oddly enough he did not pursue the conversation. It would have puzzled him to analyse his own feelings. Perhaps he felt that though such a conversation might possibly lay the basis of a future friendship between himself and Constance Gurney, yet it would be a shame to entrap her unawares in so serious a discussion. If he ever was to make love to her, he would do it openly, not by stratagem. So he remarked: "My brother and I must call on Mr. and Mrs. Gurney soon."

"Why should you not come up and see my father now? We shall find him gardening, and his unaffected happiness among his flowers would really refresh you. You can hardly imagine what a delight they are to a man who has spent the best part of his life in the city."

"I think I can," said Jim.

"See what changes men are capable of. My father has given up finance for flowers with the greatest contentment. I believe he is more anxious to succeed with the latter than he ever was with the former."

"Indeed," said Jim, incredulously.

"Our gardener Joe and my father are a splendid couple; each is more fond of flowers than the other. But you would hardly believe it," she went on gaily, "even such an innocent taste as

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that can lead men into trouble. The other day I went down to Joe's cottage and found him trying to catch his wife to beat her, for 'cussing the flowers.'"

"Poor innocent flowers," he said, "and she cussed them, and they are a deal better than she."

"Poor woman!" said Jim, "no wonder she was jealous of the flowers."

Soon they found Mr. Gurney, a tall old man, armed with gardening scissors, in the biggest of straw hats and the shortest of holland coats.

"Glad to see you, sir," said he to Jim. "Connie told me how gallantly you saved her dog yesterday. You must lunch with us, and see my roses."

It was wonderful what had come over Jim. Ordinarily he would have lounged, have yawned, have sworn he was unutterably fatigued, being the laziest mortal in existence, have thought Gurney *père* a terrible old bore, have fled from his lunch and roses as from the devil; but now he put on his best manners, followed Mr. Gurney all round the garden, admired the roses with great discrimination, and professed that nothing would delight him more than to stop to lunch, and generally behaved so that his best friends would certainly not have known him. Somehow things seemed different when Connie Gurney was within sight: not only roses, as might be thought natural; but even hot gravel paths and the prospective lunch assumed a veritable tinge of *couleur de rose*.

Chapter III.

A week passed, and that week gave Jim Duncan a higher opinion of his own abilities than any former period of his life had done. Hardly a day was there but he devised some means of accidentally seeing Connie Gurney; his own cleverness astonished him. Though he sometimes flattered himself that Constance seemed not unwilling to see him; at other times he was painfully conscious that he had already begun to fix his affections on a girl whom he hardly knew, and who had merely given him the most ordinary indications of friendship.

But he had never seen a girl like Connie before, never one so beautiful, so unaffected, clever, and well read, yet perfectly simple. Though Jim usually passed for a mere butterfly pleasure-seeker, he had a far nobler nature than the majority of those with whom he associated, and though generally a cynic, he knew how to appreciate a fine character when he found one.

One morning when Major Duncan came down to breakfast, Jim held up a letter, and said: "It has come at last." It was the early summer of 1854; the Crimean war was soon to begin, and the

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brothers had been in daily expectation of being summoned to their respective regiments, to proceed to the seat of war.

Major Duncan after examining his letters said: "Oddly enough, I too am summoned to join to day; I hope we shall manage to keep together out there."

Said Jim, striking the table with unnecessary vehemence, "Hang it."

"Why so," said the Major.

"A fortnight ago I should have hailed the idea of service with delight—I was looking forward to it; now the summons has come, and I am sorry; on a woman's account too. Who would have believed I should have come to this?"

"I think it is well that you are going to be out of the way, just in time."

"It is too late; I tell you, John, in a week's time Connie Gurney would have been my promised wife, or I should have been—well, I won't contemplate the alternative."

"Has it come to this, Jim? Well, anyhow, you must not say anything now."

"I suppose not," said Jim, "but I wish I had never come down here, or there were no war."

That afternoon Jim went down to Abbotstone with a heavy heart. He felt it would have been wise to say farewell by letter, alleging a hurried departure, but he was in no frame of mind to be wise. But he said to himself "I may be a fool, but I can hold my tongue if I please; besides her people will be there."

As he walked down the drive, he saw the flutter of a white dress through the trees ahead of him, and it suddenly occurred to him that the interview might not be quite what he had expected. He hurried on and soon overtook Connie Gurney.

"I have come to say good-bye," he said shortly.

"It is so unfortunate, my father and mother are out, but they may be in any minute; won't you come in and wait to see them?"

This was just what Jim ought to have avoided, only somehow the plan seemed to suit him marvellously.

He agreed, and was at once in his most cheerful humour. He discoursed of all things human and divine. Connie had never seemed sweeter, never more vivacious, and poor Jim gave himself up to the unrestrained enjoyment of the moment. Arrived at the house, Connie led the way to the library. It was a warm day, and it was a pleasant cool room with a French window opening on to the lawn. It had an old oak mantel-piece, and with his back against this Jim took up his position. Connie was seated in a deep low basket chair, and seemed to be almost sitting at his feet. Presently she said: "But is not your departure rather sudden, Mr. Duncan?"

"I had almost forgot," he said. "Wish me success; in a fortnight I shall be on board ship for the East."

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Connie had been a bright and cheerful little maiden hitherto, but now a change came over her. It had occurred to Jim with a sort of dull pain at first, that she seemed very little affected at his going away. He had no longer any reason to afflict himself. She started up with grief depicted on her face, "And are you really going at once to the war?"

Jim had made all kinds of good resolutions, when Connie had asked him to come in and wait, but now they were all scattered to the wind. He acted in a way which would have seemed highly wrong to the cooler judgment of his brother.

He took her unresisting hand and said, "and do you care?"

"Of course," she said. "How could I bear any friend of mine to be killed?"

Jim did not feel encouraged. Still, action was more than words, and as she did not withdraw her hand, and still looked up into his face with a troubled expression in his sweet eyes, he said:

"Connie, I have learnt more from you in a few days than from anyone else in my whole life. You have been my first true friend. Will you still be a friend to me if I return?"

"If," she said, and shuddered. "I think I should die if anything happened to you."

Passionate words had long been on Jim's lips, but now he no longer restrained them.

"Connie," he said, "let us understand one another. I said just now you were my best friend; I say now, you are my love, my sweetheart, my darling! What say you?"

What she said history revealeth not, but one day when I asked him what was the happiest moment of his life, Jim Duncan said to me, "A moment which an old bachelor like you can, perhaps, hardly understand. When unreproved, I took a certain maiden in my arms, and heard from her lips words too sacred for me to repeat." So I surmise Connie Gurney's answer was not unpleasing to Jim's ears.

Long time they sat together; what was said I know not. Novelists often say that what passes on such occasions, though deeply interesting to the parties concerned, is not so to outsiders. From this I have often dissented. But the real truth is that though Jim Duncan has told me the history of all the rest of this year of his life till I am weary of it, he would never tell me what passed on this occasion, whence I sometimes suspect that novelists may be right after all, and that what was said was very foolish and quite unworthy of the serious attention of people like you and me.

One thing I know that there was high debate between them, as to whether they should be engaged or not.

"No, Connie," said Jim, "when I remember that I have not known you much longer than a fortnight, and that I may never return from the war, I cannot allow you to consider yourself engaged

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to me. When I return I shall once more have the happiness of asking you to be my wife, and the misery of trembling till the happy 'Yes' has passed your lips."

"Very well then, Jim, you are not engaged to me, but I shall always consider myself engaged to you whatever happens."

Chapter IV.

Time flew on, and all England interested itself in nothing but the news from the seat of war. By no one in the land was news more eagerly expected than by a certain usually light-hearted little maiden in the village of Hardwicke; who, a few months ago, had been as happy as a butterfly amidst the flowers of the Abbotstone gardens, but whom now no one would think of comparing to a butterfly, so sedate had she suddenly become. She followed Jim in spirit every step of the way, and vexed herself a thousand times unnecessarily, at various perils and discomforts which she feared he was suffering. At last came news of an expected engagement. The French and English troops were marching parallel with the Russians, and expected hourly to come into collision with them. Poor Connie was in an agony of suspense. At last came the welcome news of a great victory. The Alma was fought and won; but after the exultation of heart at the victory, those at home had the sad task of waiting for the lists of killed and wounded. At Abbotstone the papers came about midday; and now Connie was daily on the look out for the postman, that she might be the first to learn the news for good or ill. One morning she was sitting at the bottom of the garden by the river, and just thinking that it must be nearly time for the postman to come, when she heard a step behind her, and, turning, saw her mother. At once she knew something had happened. "Oh, mother, mother, he is dead," she cried.

"No, Connie, not that," she said, and handed her an open paper, and she read:

"Severely wounded, Major Duncan, of the – -th Hussars; Lieut. Duncan, of —nd Foot."

She stood silent for a minute, then, looking up at her mother, said, with a short laugh: "All right, mother, I am not going to faint; I think I shall go for a short walk now by myself."

So her mother left her, congratulating herself that she had borne it so well. But if she had seen her daughter ten minutes later she might have seen cause to alter her opinion.

When she reached the meadow where Jim had found her sketching, the remembrance of that day recurred to her, and she cast herself on the ground and cried; "Oh! Jim, my darling, live, live for my sake, for I cannot live without you!" and then, as though

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ashamed of her emotion having mastered her, she rose hurriedly and with a set and tearless face walked quickly on.

Poor Connie imagined, never having been really miserable before, that her cup of misery was now full, and that any further grief would kill her. But, poor child, she had yet to learn, as the young and healthy have learnt over and over again, that it takes an almost infinite amount of grief to kill.

A week passed away without further news of Jim. He could hardly be expected to write, but still Connie hoped he would be able to get somebody to write a line for him. At last she began to grow pale and thin; habitual anxiety was depriving her of her rest. She felt a morbid pleasure in the consciousness that her health was failing her. She seemed in a way to be suffering with Jim.

Said Mr. Gurney one morning: "The papers ought to have been here an hour ago! Ah! I'll wager it is Miss Constance's fault, she has got them, poor child, and is sitting down by the river." So he sallied forth, and sure enough he saw her lying on the grass. "Very imprudent," he thought. He came a little nearer, when he stopped with a startled look, and shouted to his gardener, "Joe, make haste, Miss Constance has fainted." Yes, it was true enough. Connie had swooned, and the reason was not far to seek; by her side lay a paper, and in it might be seen, "Died of wounds received at the Alma, Lieut. James Duncan."

Chapter V.

Two months later a small crowd was assembled round the door of a first-class carriage at Paddington. A servant was assisting an invalid to arrange himself comfortably inside, and it had got about that that invalid had returned wounded from the Crimea. So the British public did him honour, honestly and admiringly, loving at heart a brave man, but honouring him in the way it understood best, by staring.

Just before the train started a young clergyman got hurriedly into the same carriage, and said to a porter, "You will see to my portmanteau; for Hardwicke, you know."

The train moved off, and the soldier in his corner eyed the parson in his, and at last said, "I beg your pardon, but are you going to Hardwicke?"

"Yes," said the parson, "Do you know it? I have been curate there for the last six weeks."

"Well, I ought to, it is my home."

"Good gracious!" said the parson, "can you be Major Duncan?"

"Ah! you have been expecting my poor brother," said the other, with a sigh. "I am Lieutenant Duncan. I only discovered this morning, when I saw my solicitor, the unhappy mistake by which my name was put in the papers as dead, instead of my

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brother. We were both on the point of death for a long time, and he, poor fellow, died."

"Ah!" said the parson, sympathetically.

"Somehow," Jim continued, "the mistake was never corrected, and I was not able to write. Directly I was well enough to think of anything they sent me home, they wanted my bed, and I might as well die at sea as in hospital, moreover, it was possible the sea would do me good. It did, marvellously. The consequence was I had to announce my own survival. I had to stop two days to rest in London, and when I summoned my solicitor to meet me at my hotel, as I could not go to see him, I shall never forget the man's surprise. I sent my servant to his chambers with a message, and he thought the name delivered must have been by mistake for Major Duncan. When he came into the room and saw me, I believe he thought me a ghost."

Jim stopped and leaned back in the carriage. Presently he put his hand into his pocket and drew from it a letter. The address was "Miss C. Gurney, Abbotstone, Hardwicke, Berkshire." "By Jove," said he, as he read it, "this is serious, I must have forgotten to post it." Then, looking up, he said, "By the way, sir, I suppose you know Mr. and Mrs. Gurney?"

"Well, yes and no," said the curate.

Now this curate being a young man of moderate wealth, of undeniable good looks and pleasant manners, was a general favourite with his lady parishioners, and had contracted from them the unfortunate habit of gossip. Therefore, after explaining that though he knew the Gurneys well by name, he had never seen them; he added:

"They went to Jersey for two months, just before I came to Hardwicke, for Miss Gurney's sake, I believe."

Jim was all attention.

"She was not very well, so the whole party went to Jersey, and took with them a Mr. Ferguson, who, I believe, Miss Gurney is engaged to."

"Is the man going to sleep," thought the curate, as Jim Duncan lay back, and pulled his travelling cap down over his eyes. He was silent for about five minutes, when he said, very slowly:

"Whence have you that last piece of information—about Miss Gurney's engagement, I mean?"

"Oh, everybody says so," said the parson, "and it is very natural; they have known one another all their lives. And it is well for her," he continued, not observing Jim's face, "for she would not get a husband round Hardwicke; most people thought her oldmaidish and slow, the short time she was there."

Fate destined that that estimable young man, the Rev. George Hardy, should be more astonished than he had been for several years. He was proceeding to analyse the popular estimation in which Miss Gurney was held a little further, when Jim, with a

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sudden access of fury, and with wonderful energy, considering his weak state, started forward and seized the curate by the throat, hissing in his face:

"Silence, in the devil's name. What right have you to criticise Miss Gurney?"

And then he leaned back again in his corner, and addressed himself apparently to studying the landscape.

For some time the Rev. George Hardy was too amazed to speak. After a minute or two he stammered out, still arranging his ruffled shirt collar:

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Duncan. I fear——"

"You will do me a great kindness if you try to forget the whole occurrence," said Jim. "I owe you an apology for my foolish violence."

And then he relapsed into silence in his corner. His frame of mind was not an enviable one. He had felt his brother's death deeply, but through all his weariness and pain of mind and body, the hope of Connie's welcome had sustained him. And now, she too had deserted him.

"And she must have gone off with this Ferguson directly she had news of my death," thought poor Jim. "Is such baseness conceivable? Is she after all no different from other women, no less cruel, and no more faithful?"

Various were the thoughts that flitted through his brain. At one moment he determined not to let her know of his arrival, and to appear on her wedding day, when she would assuredly believe him to be risen from the dead. Then he half formed a resolution to telegraph to his groom from Reading, to send a dog-cart and tandem to the station to meet him, that he might ease his feelings by furious driving. But soon, healthier thoughts prevailed. It never occurred to him to doubt Hardy's gossip, but he knew that others had lived through worse things than this, so he set his face as a flint, and determined to be what he pre-eminently was—a man.

River and trees, fields and hedges flew by him, but, for the first time in his life, Jim Duncan did not enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Thames valley through which he was passing. At last Reading was passed and Hardwicke drew near. As he got nearer and nearer to his home, an overpowering anxiety filled Jim's mind as to how he should endure to meet Constance the first time events brought her in his way. "At any rate," thought he, "she is still in Jersey, and before she returns I will be off to the Continent, so I need not see her for years perhaps." And the train drew up at Hardwicke Station.

Chapter VI.

That night Jim had little rest. Very different was his home-coming from what he had anticipated. Instead of Connie's bright

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eyes and glad smiles to welcome him, he passed a night of agony at her faithlessness. He went over every word the curate had told him. He tried soberly to calculate probabilities. It might after all be only idle report. But then, he reflected, it argues no such baseness in her. She hardly knew me; she may have had the disposition to love me, but love itself cannot grow in a day. An impression quickly made is quickly effaced. But then, thought Jim, I ought to be able to efface her recollection, and I cannot. And yet, I know her nature is nobler far than my own. At last he gave up thinking. He found he was only sure of two things about her, that he loved her better than his own life, and that whatever she did she would do rightly.

Morning came at last, and Jim determined that as soon as she returned he would learn his fate from her own lips. He would not shun her, he would go boldly to her. But the resolution formed, he felt very glad there was no need for any boldness just yet. To-day, had he met her, he might betray unmanly emotion, wearied as he was by travel, and by the first shock of grief; a short walk, he thought, would do him good; he would walk down into the meadows, where he had seen her sketching that day, and dream that it was still three months ago, and that she was still discoursing to him of friendship. It was a bright autumn day; so after a late breakfast, with the help of two walking sticks, he made his way down to the river. He progressed slowly, at every stile he had to rest; at last, he had nearly reached the field consecrated to him by Connie's divinity. Once more he seated himself on the stile, and turned to look on the way he had come; on the river, with its rushes and broad smooth reaches, on the Court a few hundred yards behind, nestled in the trees; and he fell into a reverie. He was thinking of his own riotous, boyish life; his contempt for goodness in man or woman. And then he fell to thinking of his dead brother, what a kind-hearted, brave, honourable man he had been; for a moment he lost sight of his immediate and keener grief, in the somewhat duller grief of his brother's death. He did not hear light steps behind him; he did not see a tall maiden, with much brown hair, not ruddy cheeked as of old, but pale and sad-looking, stop suddenly at the sight of him, then clasp her hands, and look up to heaven, then hurry on again. Suddenly he heard a step behind him, and at that instant he felt warm arms round his neck, and, "my darling, my darling," whispered in his ear.

Half an hour later, Jim and Connie were still walking along the stream. Jim had had a long rest on the stile and felt tired no longer. Besides Connie had given him her arm, she had insisted upon it, and Jim had given in. She then told him how they had returned late the night before from Jersey, and on their arrival how they had heard the wonderful news, that it was Lieutenant Duncan who had returned alive after all; and how that she had

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come to the meadow where they had had their first real talk together to calm her feelings, and to think of him, and pass the time till the afternoon, when she doubted not he would come to her; and Jim had said "Indeed I should not have come near you," and then he told her the story Hardy had told him, whereat she laughed sweetly, and answered:

"My poor Jim, and so you distressed yourself about Hugh Ferguson. Why, he is to all intents and purposes my younger brother; I have lectured him and kept him straight all my life" (an amiable delusion, I may remark, on Connie's part). "He is a dear boy," she continued; "but I want to marry someone who will take care of me, not someone whom I must take care of," she said, looking sweetly up into Jim's face.

"Ah! Connie, I am not fit for so dear a charge."

"And how could you doubt that I loved you?" she asked.

"Well, Connie, I remembered what a wise man said once. 'Lovers often make themselves ridiculous, by claiming to be loved as they love, for if they were equally lovable, they might perhaps claim it; but when there is nothing lovable about them the claim is absurd.' You see, I feared it might be possibly absurd of me to hope to be loved as I love."

"Yes, Jim, quite absurd of you, yet you are loved vastly more," she said.

W. S. SWAYNE.

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NEXT MORNING.

By S. PALGRAVE SIMPSON.

Chapter I.

It was at the commencement of a wild night, shortly after sundown, when I arrived at the Hagglethorpe Station, on that memorable Christmas Eve. The further we had travelled northwards the heavier had become the snow drifts. It was with great difficulty that the train had been able to make its way; and at Hagglethorpe it was nearly three hours too late.

My journey had been undertaken in order that I might spend my Christmas at the house of the father of an old college "chum," whose invitation had been as hearty as it was pressing, not to say importunate. The weather had been so unusually severe, that I was more than once on the point of telegraphing to let my friend know that my visit must be postponed. But I was loth to disappoint him; and so I had started for Stonehurst Hall at all ventures. The hall, as I had been informed, was not far from the Hagglethorpe Station; and I had rather expected to find some vehicle awaiting me to convey me to the house; but either my friend had given me up or the roads were impassable from the mass of snow. No conveyance was to be seen; and I stood shivering in a most uncomfortable and undecided state of mind, on the desolate platform of the small station.

How was I to proceed? The way to the hall was wholly unknown to me; and had I even been aware of the direction in which it lay I did not see the probability of my wading through the snow, encumbered as I was with my heavy winter wraps, and with my portmanteau, although a light one, in my hand. On consulting the wearied and sulky station-master, I learned that Stonehurst Hall was at no great distance, but that there was no possibility of obtaining any vehicle, or any hope of reaching the hall that night. Nor was it more easy to make my way to the neighbouring small town. The station-master himself was obliged to content himself with a scanty shake-down in the cold draughty building of the station. Where was I to seek for shelter? The look-out for the night was miserable enough to drive me to utter despair. On further questioning my crusty and unwilling informant told me,

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with evident reluctance and considerable hesitation of speech, that old Hagglethorpe Hall stood close by, and could be reached through the snow drifts.

"Why did you not tell me so at once?" I said; "I suppose I can be taken in for the night there."

The station-master shook his head.

"What's the impediment?" I asked.

The man looked around him, and then whispered, in a smothered voice, "Haunted!"

"And does no one live there?" I continued, with an incredulous laugh.

"Yes! old Owles," was the answer.

"Well! the birds won't frighten me!" I laughed again.

"No!" said the man. "It's old Owles, the sexton, only; and an uncanny bird he is."

Nothing more could be elicited from my unwilling informant, pump him as I might.

"Well, tell me which way to go," I said at last, "and I will affront the terrors of the haunted house."

The station-master shook his head again.

"Wilful man must have his own way," he grumbled at last. "The Old Hall lies straight enough before us over those fields." He pointed out the direction from the platform. "You would see it by daylight easy, though it's hidden now by the drifting snow and mist."

My position was so uncomfortable that I would have risked anything for shelter, warmth and rest.

"Here goes," I cried, with an affectation of cheeriness, shouldering my little portmanteau, after giving my reluctant informant a "tip;" and, crossing the railroad, I clambered over a roadside gate, and was soon floundering up to my knees in snow.

"Straight ahead!" is not an easy direction to follow, when a man is blinded by the darkness and bewildered by a biting veil of drift blown into his eyes, and I was beginning to think that I had wandered from my "straight-on track," and would probably have to spend my night amidst those desert fields of snow, when I was relieved from my throe of despair by the gleam of a light not far ahead.

A few more struggles through the snow and I stood before a long, low, dreary-looking stone-building, from one upper window of which that guiding light had gleamed.

On the portal, which stood beneath a large arch, an old-fashioned heavy iron knocker seemed ready to my hand. I knocked loudly and repeatedly. A considerable time elapsed before I had any answer to my summons.

"I have thumped furiously enough to raise the dead," I said to myself; "even the ghost of the haunted house might hear and obey my summons."

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At the same moment, a low voice, at the other side of the portal, startled me, as it uttered the words, "What is it?" A ghost might have breathed that faint sound.

"A benighted traveller lost in the snow," I answered, briskly.

There was another considerable pause. But at last the heavy door opened.

"Good heavens! This must be the ghost!" I thought, not without some involuntary tremor.

Before me stood, spectre-like, a female figure, dressed in white. It was the form of a tall girl, who, in a natural condition, must have been extremely handsome, but who was as pale as death, as befits a ghost, and looked all the more ghastly from the flickering of the candle held in its hand.

It spoke, however.

"Come in, sir," it said. "Grandfather will not refuse shelter to a stranger on such a night as this, although troubled and ill, and little fit to receive visitors."

I cannot tell why I hesitated. But a chill ran through me. Was it simply the ghostly air of this strange introducer to the house that affected me; or was the shudder produced by a presentiment of impending evil, which now came over me?

The feeble flickering light of the candle held by the ghost-like figure that preceded me, was sufficient to show me dimly that we were traversing a dreary flag-paved hall, and that a wide stone staircase, at the end opposite the entrance door, seemed to lead upwards to some still more gloomy region. That staircase had in itself a strange mysterious look, eminently befitting a haunted house. We only skirted it, however; and I found myself introduced, by my strange guide, into a large room, equally flag-paved, which might have been a servants' hall in the "palmy days" of the old mansion, but was now obviously used as a common kitchen.

At a huge table before me sat an old man, with a large book open before him, and his bony, skinny, hands stretched out on either side of it. He raised his head, as I entered, and showed me, by the light of his only candle, a lantern-jawed face, with hollow temples. A huge nose, and a mouth sunken for want of teeth, gave him the appearance of a bird of prey. The scanty long white hair which fringed the back of his bare skull had the look of the feathers of an old bald eagle, a resemblance which was augmented by the look of his lurid eyes, as he first raised them to me.

"So this," I thought, "is the man mentioned to me as old Owles, the sexton. Of a truth, as the station-master said, he is an uncanny bird."

After a pause of scrutiny, he said, in a sing-song tone, as if declaiming blank verse, "Welcome, strange sir, to this, my humble home," and added, without looking at his girl, "Miranda, see

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what cheer the house affords." With this he bent his eyes on his book again.

Miranda! How strange a name for this strange girl!

I watched the young ghost as she went to the kitchen hearth to look at the preparations being made for supper. A bright gleam of light on an object leaning against the heavy wooden mantelpiece caught my eye. The light came from the polished barrel of a gun. It seemed at the same moment to have attracted the attention of the girl; she seized the gun and, looking first at me, then at her old grandfather with an air of painful doubt and suspicion, crossed the kitchen stealthily and hid the weapon in a closet. It seemed to me that she was greatly troubled when she discovered that I was watching her.

After examining the preparations for supper on the hearth the girl pushed a wooden arm-chair up to the fireside, and pointed it out to me with a mute wave of her hand. Then she left the room with that peculiar cat-like step which I had already remarked. The old man still read on, mumbling to himself in a low rhythmical chant. I was tired after my journey; and my brain was heavy with the cold. No wonder that I dropped asleep in the midst of my conjectures as to the meaning of what had been going on around me. I was aroused from my heavy doze by the sound of talking, and I heard a man's voice, which was not that of the old man, say:

"Why did you put it away?"

"I didn't want him to see the gun; he might have suspected," was the answer in the voice of the girl. Suspected what? What might I have suspected? I was fully roused now, but I kept my eyes closed and listened.

"Bosh!" returned the rough male voice. "How should he guess the use I intend to make of it? Why should he fancy anything bad?"

The old man chaunted the words, "Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill."

What did all this mean? Someone approached near me as if scanning my face to see whether I still slept, and then stept back. On opening my eyes I saw the figure of a tall youth, with unkempt locks and a haggard, handsome face, who was weighing my portmanteau in his hand.

I have always had a lively imagination, which is apt to jump at hasty conclusions, and the thought now darted through my brain that, instead of a "haunted house," I had entered a den of thieves, and that I might be the victim of robbery—perhaps murder.

"There ain't much there," said the young man, as he left poising my portmanteau and put it down, "yet the fellow seems a wealthy swell. Look at his rings and his breast-pin; they are worth the having," and he laughed a harsh and discordant laugh.

"Art thou afeard to be the same in thine own act and valour as

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thou art in desire?" chanted the old man, in his monotonous sing-song tone.

Was the old miscreant urging the lad to rob me?

Misgivings swept over my mind thicker and thicker, like thunder-clouds before an approaching storm.

The girl, Miranda, was laying the cloth for supper at the further end of the table.

"Come and help me, Ferdinand," she said. "A pretty brother you are, to let me do all the work; and put that thing down," she added, as she crossed the room, in a whisper to the young man, who was now examining the gun in the closet.

"All right, it may be there till it's wanted," answers the brother, shutting the closet door, and coming to the hearth to remove the stew, which had been cooking.

The supper was soon ready.

"Come, gran-dad! wake up, and look alive!" cried the lad, shaking old Owles by the shoulder, "there's more to be done to night, you know, than poring over old books."

"I dare do all that may become a man," murmured the old sexton, without lifting his eyes from the volume before him.

As answer to this speech, Master Ferdinand shut up the book with a bang. The old man looked dazed and bewildered, but rose without a word, and took his seat at the further end of the table.

"Will it please you to take a little supper with us," said the girl, planting herself before me, and gazing on me, as it seemed, with a strange, mournful look of pity.

I thanked her for her invitation and acquiesced, taking my place between the old man and his grand-daughter.

Old Owles seemed more sprightly now, and welcomed me with something like a smile on his wizen face.

"This is poor cheer for one who's travelled far," he said, with his peculiar rhythm. But, spite of his disclaimer, the food was good and abundant. "Fetch us that wine, boy," he exclaimed. "You know the wine I mean, there is one bottle left. We drink no wine ourselves, but strangers must be honoured," he added.

The young fellow rose, lifted a trap, and dived down into a lower cellar region, from which he shortly returned with an old dust-covered bottle.

My tumbler was soon filled, and the old man urged me to drink with singular importunity. Not one of the others of the party would touch a drop, but regaled themselves with beer. I had heard of victims drugged before their murder; I had read of such deeds in novels; seen them done in sensational melodramas; and I took an opportunity to pour the liquid out under the table, taking care to smack my lips.

"'Tis a good generous wine, they say," remarked the old man.

"A little heady, perhaps," I replied.

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"And all the better you will sleep for that," he went on, with a ghastly grin on his lantern jaws.

"No doubt! no doubt! had I drank it," I thought.

My situation seemed to me so precarious that I longed to be away from my evil-boding associates, and to be able to reconnoitre my position alone. I feigned more weakness and drowsiness than I really felt. Presently, the girl Miranda, who had left the kitchen, returned to announce that a room was prepared for me. I rose immediately.

"Pleasant rest to you," said the old man, with an air of graciousness, "and sleep—sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care." The words were familiar to me, and some how (I could not tell why, just then) were connected in my mind with murder! Why did the old fellow use them?

I took up my portmanteau, sharply watched, I thought, by the youth, bade the two men "good-night," with as much ease and apparent cordiality as I could assume, and followed the girl across the dreary hall.

She led the way to a room on the left of the entrance. I felt relieved in my mind that I had not to mount that gloomy staircase, to the mysterious recesses of which I felt the greatest repugnance. At the door of my destined resting-place the girl put the candlestick she held into my hand, and wished me "good night," in a mournful tone, with a weary, dazed, dreamy look on her pale handsome face.

The room, as far as I could see, by the light of the flickering, guttering candle, was large and dreary, with an air of being seldom, if ever, used by the strange inhabitants of the old hall. There was a sort of truckle-bed at the further end. To my left, as I entered, was a large window covered with heavy shutters; and on the opposite side a yawning fireplace, on the hearth of which a wood fire had been evidently very lately lighted. It afforded but little warmth, and was evidently working hard to fill the room with smoke. I resolved to throw myself down on the pallet bed without undressing, covered by my ulster, and await events. In the painfully agitated state of my mind, sleep, I felt, was impossible. But first my surroundings had to be reconnoitred. The door I found to be without a bar; and there was no key to the rusty old lock. The means of shutting out any intruder failed me utterly. Was this design, or chance? In case of an attack I had no weapons of defence, nothing but my own arms and strength to which to trust in a struggle.

Stay! there was a second door to my right, which possibly might communicate with some other part of the house. I crossed the room and opened it. Before me was only a large closet; and, to my horror, I saw lying on the floor of it an open coffin with a shrouded corpse! This discovery startled me to that extent that the candle fell from my hand and was extinguished. I shuddered in

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every limb, and could scarcely find strength to close the closet door on its ghastly contents. I tried to collect my bewildered senses. Conjecture as I might I could find no explanation of the terrible revelation, except in the fact that the body was that of a previous victim of these miscreant murderers. What was to be done? I would endeavour to escape from the fate that probably awaited me. There was a round aperture in the window shutters, through which a faint moonlight struggled. This afforded me some small degree of light in that fearful obscurity. But the window shutters themselves were crossed by heavy iron bars and padlocked. I opened the door and found myself once more in that dismal hall. All was dark—all was still. Better affront the cold and the masses of snow outside, than remain any longer in that fearful horror! I felt my way along the damp walls until I reached the great entrance door. With difficulty I found the bolts. But they resisted my efforts to withdraw them; and I did not dare to make a noise. My cold fingers were maimed and torn in the effort. My blood was flowing. Even could I succeed in removing those impediments to my escape, there was still the great heavy lock to undo, and in that there was no key. I felt sick and faint, as much from pain as from horror at my situation.

As I stood leaning back against the door panting and trembling, I was suddenly startled by a gleam of light: it came from the top of the great staircase. Presently appeared the figure of the girl, Miranda, with a candle in her hand, looking more like a ghost then ever. She commenced descending the stairs with slow step, staring straight before her—the strangest of apparitions.

She could not see me, but what was that? Another figure appeared behind her, that of the young wild fellow, her brother Ferdinand; neither spoke to the other. I did not want to be discovered in the hall; and I retreated back into my room, closing the door quietly, and crept to my truckle-bed.

I waited with a palpitating heart; the door opened slowly and the girl entered with gliding, ghostly step. Of me she seemed to take as yet no notice. She placed her candle on the table which was in the centre of the room, and paused as if in thought, then moved slowly towards the window, and made as if she would open the shutters. I then saw that she had a paper, it looked like a letter, in her hand; but she turned from the window with a deep sigh, and shook her head. Her brother meanwhile, had approached my resting place on tip-toe to see whether I slept; satisfied on that point, as I lay still with my eyes closed, he went up to the girl, who still wandered slowly in the room and moaned.

"Miranda," he said to her in a low whispered voice, and very gently, "what are you doing? Come—come away with me."

"No," was the girl's reply, in a husky tone, "I must warn him—I must warn him—you want to kill him—you swore a great oath

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that you would kill him—and I must warn him—warn him—warn him!"

"Come away!" repeated the young fellow, softly.

"Spare him! spare him!" cried the girl hoarsely, "spare him, or kill me too!" and she sank on her knees with outstretched arms.

Her brother seemed to lose all patience.

"You must come," he said, still softly but angrily, as he spoke he snatched the letter from her hand, and seized her somewhat roughly by the arm. The girl started to her feet with a wild shriek, stood for a moment as if bewildered, and then with a groan reeled back. The young man caught her in his arms, took the candle from the table and bore her fainting from the room.

I listened for a time, and heard heavy steps on the staircase. I ventured again to the door, and looked out; all was dark, all was still once more; the strange scene seemed to me like a dream. Yet I was wide awake. I had heard only too distinctly her colloquy with her brother, and his purpose of murder. There were no means of escape for me from that awful den. All I could do was to drag the table up against the door as a barricade, and place a chair on it, at least the door could not be again opened without considerable noise. I threw myself again on my bed, and listened. My thoughts reverted with a shudder to the other dreadful inmate of that room; and so I waited for that morning which would be so slow to dawn.

How was it? I cannot tell. But after a time, the heaviness of slumber came over me. I absolutely slept!

Chapter II.

When I started up suddenly at last, sunlight was peering through the round aperture in the shutters, and there was a sound of distant bells chiming cheerily. It was the "next morning." It was Christmas Day. My barricade had remained untouched. Had my intended assailants foregone their purpose? Had they been moved by some feeling of humanity already, or had they feared my resistance? I could not tell. At any rate, it was certainly the "next morning;" and I was as yet unattacked. I sat upon the edge of my poor bed, pondering on the events of the night, and wondering. The light of day seemed to have turned the current of my feelings. The sense of agonising terror had left me. Even the large dreary room bore another aspect to my mind. Spite of its scanty furniture it was almost cheery, although that smoky fire had long since burned out. But now my thoughts reverted to that closet with its ghastly contents. I could almost fancy that my discovery of that dread coffin was only a portion of a hideous dream; and yet I could not summon up courage to open

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that closet door again, to convince myself that it was no dream. I sat and listened, unresolved what was best for me to do next.

Presently an attempt was made to open the door. I felt stronger after my refreshing sleep, and able to offer any amount of resistance. I was another man. So I boldly removed my heavy barricade, the door opened, and the youth, Ferdinand, entered the room. He brought water and towels, and all the appliances for an early toilette. He, too, seemed utterly transmogrified by the morning light. There was still a wild look about him, certainly. But a smile was on his handsome face, especially when he seemed to divine the meaning of that intended barricade, and looked at me almost mockingly. He hoped that I had slept well—this wish I thought was spoken with a peering look of curiosity—and wished me "a merry Christmas." Then he unlocked the padlock of the window bar, and opened the shutter. It was a glorious day. A great change had been already wrought on this "next morning." The sun was shining brightly in the clear sky, and, as I followed to the window, I could see that the snow was melting, and that a rapid thaw had set in. The station was now distinctly visible at no great distance across the fields.

The young man seated himself, leisurely, as I commenced my ablutions, intent, it seemed to me, on conversation.

"Are you travelling far?" he asked.

"No!" I replied, in the intervals of the application of towel and water. "I am only bound for Stonehurst Hall, which, I hear, is somewhere in your immediate neighbourhood."

He seemed troubled, and knit his brow savagely, as he muttered, "Oh! indeed."

"Yes!" I continued, "young Everard Redland is a great chum of mine, and I am going——"

I was interrupted by the sudden start the youth made as he rose to his feet. His face was violently flushed, and his hands were clenched. He seemed to be about to speak. But he checked himself with a violent effort, and sank back in his chair, growling unintelligible sounds to himself.

"What a queer lot!" I thought. "If not murderously inclined they must, at least, be mad, one and all."

Ferdinand sat brooding, until the silence became oppressive. I broke it by asking after his grandfather.

"Poor old gran-dad," he said looking up, "is an odd fish. I hope you didn't mind his strange ways, last night. You see, sir, he is mad about Shakespeare, and he has got Shakespeare so into the manner of his talk, as one may say, that he always speaks now in what they call 'blank verse.' He is a little out of his mind, we think. He had me and sister named Ferdinand and Miranda, out of respect to his favourite old poet, and there's no knowing what he'll do next. Last night he was reading 'Macbeth.' He reads all the plays over and over again; and

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he mumbles all he reads to himself in the queerest fashion. Oh! Launcelot Owles is known for miles round as a scholar!"

A recollection of the old man's strange words came over me, and I began now to account for his singular utterances. The interpretations, I had put on them the night before must have been a delusion.

"They told me, at the station, that he was the Hagglethorpe sexton," I said.

"True, sir! and worse luck. He is too old and feeble now to do his work properly; but he is mighty touchy at being told so. He won't be interfered with; and, just now, he is in a rare state of mind. What with the severe frost and the deep snow he cannot bury the dead for the present; and he has been obliged to make a mortuary, as he calls it, of his own house, before a poor corpse can be carried to the church-yard. The country people won't keep the bodies in their own houses, because it's ill-luck, they say."

As he spoke the young man stole a furtive look towards that awful closet, and then looked inquiringly at me, as if to discover whether I was aware of the ghastly contents.

The shame I felt at my own terrors of the previous night kept me silent; and I did not betray my knowledge.

I was now brimming with curiosity to come to some explanation of the other strange events of the previous night and the consequent surmises which had excited so much apprehension in my mind. But my companion said no more. I was determined, however, to come to an elucidation of all the mysteries.

"Your sister, Miranda," I began, as if in a casual way, whilst I completed my ablutions, "is a very striking and attractive young woman, I must say."

"Yes, Heaven help her!" replied the brother, in a sulky tone and with a husky voice.

"But she seems suffering in health," I ventured to add.

The young man looked at me sharply, as if to gather from my expression whether I had really been awake when his sister had entered my room, and had witnessed and heard the singular scene which had followed. But I gave no sign. He started from his chair and again clenched his fists savagely. Then, walking up and down the room, he muttered,

"Poor girl! poor girl!"

As he passed the window he looked out, and started back with an angry exclamation, so abrupt that I followed to see what had called forth this burst of indignation.

A dog-cart was standing before the station.

"It is he, damn him!" growled Ferdinand, shaking his fist at the distant figure, then after a moment, he added, "No, it is only the groom," and retreated from the window.

I paid little attention to the strange manner of the young man,

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for I conjectured at once that the trap had been sent over for me from Stonehurst Hall, as soon as the weather had permitted; and I was right. The groom, after a conference with the station-master, now left the dog-cart in the hands of a boy, and came straight over the fields, through the melting snow, to the door of old Hagglethorpe Hall.

A few minutes afterwards I took leave of my strange hosts, with many thanks for their hospitality. Old Launcelot Owles wished me "God speed, and pleasant fortunes," and I departed thus from that house, which had been on the previous night so replete to me of terrors—terrors, which the "next morning" had swept away as flimsy cobwebs of the brain. The girl, Miranda, had not appeared, to my infinite disappointment. In answer to my inquiries, Ferdinand stated gruffly that she was ill, whilst the old man chanted something about "thick coming fancies."

I reached the station through the "slushy" fields—the road to Stonehurst Hall was now passable, though still encumbered with melting snow, and in a few minutes I was on my way to my destination.

After my late fatigues of mind and body, it was a great relief to find myself under the roof of Stonehurst Hall, where all was bright, warm, and cheery. Everard received me with effusion, and the old Squire, his father, gave me the most cordial of welcomes. At the profuse breakfast, which awaited me, many apologies were offered me by the Squire for his not doing the impossible in sending to the station to meet me the previous evening; and I was called on to explain how I had spent the night. On my narrating how I had found a refuge in Old Hagglethorpe Hall, I fancied that my young friend looked troubled and embarrassed. He seemed obviously anxious to change the conversation. On my own side, I was naturally unwilling to speak of the terrors with which my mind had been beset. It was only when I found myself alone with my old chum, puffing away at our cigars in the study, that our intercourse seemed inclined to be more free and unconstrained.

Everard Redland was a fine, handsome, manly young fellow, but inclined, as I knew from old times, to be of a romantic and rather sentimental disposition. He now seemed as eager to turn the conversation to the subject of Old Hagglethorpe Hall as he had before been unwilling to continue it in his father's presence; and he plied me with questions about the night I had spent under its roof. I was still shy of mentioning my late apprehensions, which now appeared in a ridiculous light; and I only dilated upon the strange inmates of the old hall.

"Yes, they are a queer lot," said Everard. "Poor old Launcelot Owles is half-witted; but there is no harm about him. I wish I could say as much for his grandson. The fellow is dangerous."

"Is he half-witted too?" I asked.

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"No! he is downright mad. A wild, reckless, conceited, bullying, ne'er-do-well. A poaching rascal, too, or his neighbours belie him, He has no license to carry a gun, yet he has been seen with one. Shots have been heard at night. But let me catch him, and he shall pay me off."

"You don't seem to have a strong affection for him," I laughed.

"I hate him as I would the devil. The insolent vagabond has even threatened me."

"Threatened *you*; why?"

"No matter now; but he had better look sharp or he will have the worst of it."

My friend Everard seemed to be working himself up into such a passion, that I thought I had better change the subject.

"And that handsome, pale girl, his sister; is she of the demented order too?"

"Miranda! no, bless her! She is a charming, clever creature, who has been educated above her station. In her mother's time she was brought up as a lady; it is pitiable to think that she has been left to such rough guardianship; she is the sweetest and most lovable creature in the world," and Everard, as he spoke, threw himself back in his chair, and heaved a heavy sigh.

There was so much fervour in my friend's words that a suspicion crossed my mind at once. It was clear to me that Master Everard, with his susceptible, romantic disposition, was in love with the girl. It was as well, I thought, that I should say nothing of the strange scene in my room of the night before. I smiled, however; and my smile, I suppose was a significant one, for, after a pause, Everard Redland burst forth again.

"Well, I don't mind telling you, old fellow, I am desperately in love with Miranda; and she reciprocates my passion. Don't shake your head. I mean honourably with the girl: but my father won't hear of the match; and that confounded brother of hers chooses to think that I want to seduce his sister, and has sworn to exterminate me. He watches every movement of his poor sister like a lynx, and endeavours to intercept any letter or other communication between us. All would be right if I could obtain my father's consent; but, in the meanwhile, poor Miranda suffers cruelly. She is awfully frightened at her brother's threats and is in a fearful state of nervous weakness. They will kill the dear girl between them if they don't take care. I know they will. Poor dear, dear Miranda."

Everard clasped his hands excitedly and looked upwards in painful thought.

It dawned on my mind that on the previous night the poor girl must have been walking in her sleep, dreaming of her lover's danger and bearing a missive to him to warn him. This conviction solved the whole mystery at once.

The flood-gates of his tongue once opened, Everard poured forth

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a torrent of gushing talk about his love-affair, and I listened with all that complacent interest which a friend is bound to assume, under the circumstances, even if he does not feel it. The truth to tell, too, I was no little interested in all the personages who had been the fantastic *dramatis personæ* of my absurd nightmare.

As we thus sat, my attention was suddenly attracted to a dark figure, at the window, opposite to which I sat. It was the youth, Ferdinand, who peered in, wild and glaring. He had his gun in his hand. I sprang up with a cry of alarm. The fellow's intentions appeared to be threatening in the highest degree; but, as I threw myself between him and my friend, he disappeared.

"What is it?" said Edward, rising.

"He was there!" I answered.

"He! Who?"

"The brother!"

"The rascal! What does he want here?"

"No good, it seems—he had a gun in his hand."

My friend rushed towards the door, as if to go and meet his enemy; but I endeavoured to prevent him. I feared the worst, should the two men meet.

Now there was a noise and a scuffle in the hall: and a servant came in immediately to explain. But before he could speak, Ferdinand pushed him violently aside and entered the room. I kept Everard back as much as I could, and confronted the fellow with the demand, "What are you doing here?"

"Let me pass," he cried, furiously. "She is dying; and that villain is her murderer. I will have life for life!" and he raised his gun. I had a sharp tussle with him in my endeavour to drag the weapon from his hands, but Everard came between us.

"Miranda dying!" he shouted. "Good heavens! what do you say?"

"She is raving in delirium," cried the excited brother, "and you, you devil, have brought her to this pass."

By this time, I had succeeded in my efforts and placed the gun away in a corner. The two men glared fiercely at each other, both as pale as death.

The old Squire now appeared.

"What does all this uproar in my house mean?" he said, angrily; "and what do you do here?" he added, turning on Ferdinand.

"He tells me his sister is dying," exclaimed Everard, "dying, my Miranda dying! He accuses *me* of her murder, but it is you, father, who have done this. Had you not stood in the way of my love, she had long since been my wife—we should have been happy—and she——"

"She would have been your wife?" interrupted the brother.

"Yes! my wife!" sobbed Everard, falling back into a chair and covering his face with his hands.

The good old Squire was evidently much moved. He rang the

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"LET ME PASS!" HE CRIED, FURIOUSLY.—*See page* 694.

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bell and ordered that a horse should be saddled and dispatched to the doctor, to summon him at once to Old Hagglethorpe Hall. Everard insisted on riding over himself.

We soon learned that the poor girl was in a brain fever, her nervous condition having been fearfully aggravated by her having been rudely roused from her sleep-walking trance by her brother.

My own individual share of the drama came now to its termination. But I am glad to end with a happy *dénouement* to it. The poor girl recovered from her severe illness; the old Squire relented; and Everard was made happy in his love long before those Christmas bells, which had greeted me on the memorable "next morning," chimed again—he was married to Miranda.

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CHINAMEN AND JAPPERS.

ALTHOUGH intimate acquaintance between Europeans and the dwellers in the Far East is but a plant of comparatively recent growth, there are phases of it and associations connected with it which are already beginning to be regarded as old-fashioned, and the gradual disappearance of which is to be regretted. The two chief races which inhabit that yet mystic region, so long content to jog on in a state of civilisation hallowed by time, when finally stirred to movement, gave such a leap forward that the European resident amongst them of to-day, dwells in a totally distinct sphere from that familiar to the pioneers of Western enterprise, and especially so in the case of Japan. It is now seven years since the writer left Japan, and he is frequently assured by friends still residing there, that he would hardly know either the place or the people, so that we may form a slight idea of the amount of genuine old China and Japan will be left to posterity when we consider that this change has been effected in so short a time.

The old "Far Easter" looks upon the China or Japan of his day with much the same feelings that a very old gentleman regards the Merrie England of his youth. Life out there in the old days was much more of an exile, and was held on a more precarious tenure it is true, but there was none of the constant hurry and worry and bother which now characterises it. The mails came in and went out perhaps once a fortnight, and during the interval each man was at liberty to pass his time as he thought fit, and everyone knows from the legends and stories which have come down to us, and which have an almost Arabian Night ring about them, how the old merchant princes made the time fly in what are still called the "good old days."

But it is all over. Life at a China or Japan port in these days is more anxious and hurried and vexatious even than at home; mails flit in and out all day and every day; regular hours of work are, of course, unknown; Sundays are Sundays in little more than in name, and the "Griffin" who jumps with glee at the notion of exchanging the humdrum, monotonous drudgery of the city, for a joyous, free and easy sphere of much play and little work, is very soon disenchanted by the sternness of the reality.

It is therefore reasonable to suppose that such natives as are brought into immediate contact with foreigners have changed with the times, and that a new order of things has come about in

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the domestic as well as in the political and social life of China and Japan. Upon this supposition I have raked up some old memories of Far East life, which may be instructive to the modern resident and amusing to the general reader—memories which I promise shall have nothing of a philosophical, or ethnological, or "traveller-tale" ring about them, but which I may describe as being almost entirely of a domestic nature.

There is a capital story told of a hot-tempered, imperious German in Shanghai who was notorious for ruling his domestics with a rod if not of iron at least of very potent bamboo, and who was consequently pretty generally hated by all the natives with whom he was brought in contact. He had detected his "boy" in some trifling act of larceny, and was determined to make an example of him. So he called the fellow into his room one morning and said to him:

"Boy, I'm going to give you a jolly good hiding. Lock the door."

The boy, with that calm, Buddha-like serenity characteristic of his race under most circumstances, answered not a word, but locked the door. An Indian or a Japanese would have grovelled on the ground and begged for mercy, but not so our Chinaman, a clean-limbed, stoutly made fellow of some five and twenty years of age. He stood calmly waiting for his master to begin. The German proceeded to take off his coat and to roll up his shirt sleeves. The boy did the same. This rather astonished the German, but he advanced towards the motionless boy, bending a supple-jack in his hand. Instantly the boy threw himself into the most approved British posture of defence, left leg and arm advanced, right arm covering the upper part of the body, weight resting on the right foot. The German recoiled at this unheard-of attitude on the part of a China boy, and called him every name he could think of; but the boy simply said, "Now, sir, you talkee you give my number one good hiding; you allus hide me. This time I can secure I hide you." And, suiting the action to the word, he gave his master such a thrashing as no European ever received at the hands of a Chinaman, and, quietly unlocking the door, wished him chin-chin, and left him sprawling on the floor with a pair of black eyes. It turned out that the boy had been steward on board a P. and O. steamer, and that he had picked up the "noble art" during his voyages.

This, however, is an exceptional case, for, as a rule, Chinaman and Jappers stand any amount of knocking about at the hands of the civilised Westerns without a show of retaliation. Yet, once on the Bund at Nagasaki, I saw a drunken English man-o'-war's-man stagger up to an inoffensive "jinrickisha" coolie and hit him violently in the face, whereupon the coolie, who was a stalwart fellow, picked Jack up and quietly dropped him over into the harbour.

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The faculty of imitation possessed by Chinamen is proverbial, although they do not possess one tithe of the inventive genius of their neighbours in Japan. I once gave a Chinese tailor an order for a coat, and left with him as a pattern an old one which had lain for a long time folded up. In the course of a few days the new coat came back, and to my great surprise I found it literally seamed with folds and creases. Upon my expostulating with the man, he said: "Look here, sir, you have give me one piecey coat as a pattern, and you talkey my make new coat allo same. I have done so." And sure enough, he had copied it exactly, to the very folds and creases. Of course a modern Hongkong or Shanghai tailor would not be so simple-minded, and the famous Mr. Cock-eye turns out very creditable work indeed, but as my tailor was the solitary Sartor in a small settlement on the Yangtse, the result was not to be wondered at.

Next to his affection for parents, and his veneration of ancestors, the Chinaman's ruling passion is for the acquisition and the hoarding up of the mighty dollar.

Old residents in Japan may remember the terrible catastrophe which happened in Yokohama harbour in August, 1872, when the large American steamer *America*, with a crowd of eight hundred Chinese coolies on board, was burnt. Some sixty of them lost their lives, and it was found that in the majority of cases life would probably have been saved, had the foolish fellows not, at the first alarm, girdled themselves about with their hard-earned dollars, and jumped overboard, of course never to rise again alive.

Moreover, an eye-witness stated that many of them, in their rage to save their belongings, hurled over their chests and boxes upon the heads of their unfortunate fellow-countrymen struggling in the water beneath. A few mornings after, I saw three barge-loads of dead Chinamen by the side of the "hatoba" or landing place, and such a sight I never wish to see again.

Utter indifference to Death is a very marked characteristic of the Japanese nature, although not predestinators as are the fanatic Mussulmans, and a thrashing has far greater terrors for them than Death even in its most hideous forms.

Europeans who have "assisted" at the numberless fires which lend so much excitement to winter life in Japan, know with what recklessness, which would be heroic if it were not foolhardy, the native firemen work. The captain of the brigade, with his fluttering white-paper standard, is their guide; with him they advance or recede—always by inches, and many instances are on record—notably at the burning of the great temple at Shiba, in Yedo—of captain, firemen, standard and all falling victims to misjudged devotion to a public cause.

I was present at the last public execution which took place in Japan, and although it occurred ten years back, the circumstances

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are as fresh before me as if they had taken place yesterday. The place of execution was an elevated plateau, known as "Tobé," about a mile from Yokohama, commanding an exquisite view of the Bay with its fringe of wooded hills which, upon this fresh, brilliant morning, seemed to be wreathed with a mocking glory of sunshine.

The criminals were seven in number, and, with the exception of one man who had been so tortured in prison as to be unable to move his limbs, who was carried in a litter, as they walked up the fatal slope were laughing and joking, as if on their way to some popular festival. As there were but three mounds of earth, each with its square hole in front, four of the unfortunates, mercifully bandaged with white paper, were obliged to remain standing in a row, whilst the first victims were dispatched; and whilst thus standing, the only sounds that broke the dead silence of the awful scene, were the jests and jibes which were uttered by the four. One man even—he was a priest, I remember—as he knelt upon the mound of earth, and the executioner was dipping his blade into water, sent forth a volley of puns and local allusions, and in the midst of his own laughter thereat, the sword came down and his head fell into the hole.

The idea has been suggested, and indeed has been seriously entertained, in these days of degenerate domestic servants, of importing Chinamen to act in the places of the drunken, insolent Jeames, and the lazy, big-idea'd Mary Jane. Whether the practical development of the idea would succeed as regards the personal comfort of the intruders can only be proved by actual experiment; but that the lives of mistresses would no longer be so much of a burden to them as they are under the present *régime* cannot be doubted for a moment. Chinamen are perfect servants, and Jappers promised to become so some years ago. They cook admirably—even with originality and taste. They are irreproachably clean, they are silent, obedient, attentive, respectful, intelligent, and, as a general rule, honest and sober.

Best of all, perhaps, the China boy is reliable. He is never to be taken by surprise, never caught napping, is full of expedient, and invaluable in cases of emergency. At lunch time you tell him there will be four people to dinner at seven o'clock. At six o'clock you return from the club, or the boat-house, or the cricket field, or the racket court, and you inform him that six more gentlemen are coming to dine. Such information at so short a notice would drive an English cook out of her wits. Not so your China chef. He merely bows, and says not a word, and you may make yourself perfectly easy that at the hour of dinner nothing will be wanting. There is a sort of freemasonry amongst the boys of various Hongs, which enables them to help one another in such times of need. Thus, the head boy finds that he is short of plates, or spoons, or tumblers; he does not come to you with a long face for

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an order to buy the necessary requisites, but he sends over to a friend, who lends them without a word, knowing that his time of need may come, and I have frequently dined off my own plates at other people's tables.

One anecdote will illustrate this readiness on the part of China boys.

When the British Government kept a regiment stationed at Yokohama, a very "lardy-dardy" young officer called upon a friend of mine who was by no means blessed with a superabundance of the good things of this world. According to custom my friend asked him what he would take to drink, imagining that he would say a glass of sherry, or of beer, or what not. Instead of this, the young officer said: "Haw! think I'll have a hock and seltzer."

My friend was a little dismayed as he knew that there was neither hock nor seltzer in the house, but he clapped his hands for his China boy, and said:

"Go catchee some hock and seltzer, for this gentleman." The boy went out, and presently returned with it.

After the officer had gone, my friend said to the boy: "What side you catchee that hock and seltzer?"

The fellow grinned from ear to ear, and said: "O, that belong easy, sir. I have one piecey friend there at number seventy-eight, I makey lend him knives and forks last night, he makey lend my hock and seltzer to-day; that belong easy, sir."

Japanese boys are, or I should say, were, much more rough and unsophisticated, and required more licking into shape than China boys; moreover, honesty used not to be one of their shining virtues, and in their fondness for the bottle, they were strongly contrasted with the abstemious sons of Han. Their simplicity as regards manners often made them do and say ludicrous things. I remember upon one occasion there were but two of us to dinner, and the cook sent up a dish of curry big enough for half-a-dozen guests. One of us commented upon this unnecessary extravagance to the other, whereupon, the boy who was standing behind my chair, and who understood English, interposed his word, and said: "I am very sorry for you, sir; bot it is very cheap." Another time, the *rechauffeé* of a dish which we had sent down from a previous meal almost untouched, reappeared bearing indisputable evidence of having been extensively tampered with; for the Jappers have conquered their original aversion to European cookery, and surreptitiously pick at dishes on their way to and from table, in a manner which would do credit to an English Buttons. So I said to my friend: "I believe some of these rascals have been having a go at this dish," upon which the same boy leant forward, and said:

"I beg your pardon, sir, bot we do not like it."

Both these uninvited remarks were made with such grave simplicity, that all wrath at their seeming impertinence was

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softened, and we could only laugh. I directed this same boy upon another occasion to lay out my "dress things" as I was going to dine out. Upon my arrival in my bedroom, I found my lightest fancy suit, my most gorgeous neck-tie, and my newest gloves spread out on the bed. "Dress things" in the mind of my simple henchman were of course associated with what was most brilliant and showy.

This boy, however, was invaluable to me, and upon an expedition I made to ascend the holy mountain Fuji-yama, I took him with me. It was at this time necessary for all foreigners travelling beyond what were called "Treaty Limits," to procure a passport signed by their consul and by the head of the local police, certifying that they travelled purely for health, and not for purposes of trade. I had procured my passport, as I thought, entirely *en régle*, and after four days' hard walking arrived at the little village of Subashiri at the foot of the mountain, from which most ascents are made.

Comforted with the assurance that all legal formalities had been complied with, and thoroughly tired out, I went to sleep at an early hour, having previously deposited my pass with the local magnate for verification. About the middle of the night I was awakened by the flashing of lanterns and the sound of voices. I imagined that it was a fire. I jumped up, but presently my boy humbly crawled in with my passport in his hand. "I am very sorry for you, sir," he said, "but the Yakunin says that this pass is wrong, and that you must return to Yokohama immediate."

"Oh, that's nonsense!" I exclaimed, "I haven't been fagging along all this time simply to be made a fool of like this. Tell the Yakunin that I'm going up the mountain, and let me go to sleep."

The boy made an obeisance and withdrew. I could hear much chattering and arguing going on outside, and presently my boy reappeared.

"I am very sorry for you, sir," he said, "but if you will go up Fuji against orders, I, as your guide, will be obliged to do Hara-Kiri"— as he uttered this last word, which has been wrongly translated as the "Happy-Dispatch," he significantly drew his fan across his stomach and gave it the orthodox upward jerk. I knew how completely the lower classes in Japan were under the power of the authorities, so that there was nothing to do but to heap blessings on the head of the Yakunin and to prepare for instant departure.

One very marked difference between Jappers and Chinamen is the ardent thirst possessed by the former for all sorts of Western knowledge, and the utter indifference of the latter to the same. Chinamen are quite content to run in the old life-groove four thousand years old; Jappers are for ever striving to jump over five hundred years in as many days.

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I remember once, during one of my customary autumn tramps in the country, putting up for the night at the exquisitely beautiful little village of Tonasawa on the road to the famous sulphur baths of Hakoni. I was somewhat surprised upon my arrival at the tea-house to see a pile of European school-books in a corner, for I knew that very few Europeans stopped at Tonasawa. In reply to my question as to their ownership, I was informed that they belonged to a Japanese student from one of the colleges in Yedo, who was spending his vacation in the village. Imagine an English schoolboy passing his holidays in company with his books! And long after I had retired between my quilts for the night, I could hear the young gentleman reading, slowly and painfully, out of the *Student's Hume*.

Some of the efforts on the part of Jappers to appear civilised, according to Western notions, are ludicrous in the extreme. At the above-mentioned watering-place, Hakoni, there is a tea-house much patronised by foreigners, outside which on a huge board might have been read, ten years ago, the following notification:

"GRAND HOTEL HAKONI."
Great accomodation for Englisch and American gentlemans and good Beer sold by Mister Kikuchi."

At the door of the same establishment the landlord was posted, arrayed in what he fondly conceived to be a correct reproduction of orthodox European evening dress, but which made him look like a hybrid between an undertaker and a decayed city waiter.

To interlard conversation frequently with the "Big, big D" is considered by Jappers indisputable proof of intimate acquaintance with the English tongue—at least, it used to be, probably the spread of Western education has swept away this notion—thus, in reply to a remark that it was a fine day, a Japper would say, "Oh, Yes! dam! very fine day! dam fine day!" Many English expressions have become incorporated with the language. Thus, at the seaports a sailor is always known as a "Damyoureyes s'hto," and the generic name for dogs is "Com here." Still more amusing is the language used by Chinamen in their intercourse with foreigners, and known as Pidgin-English. It is even taught in the schools, and it is no uncommon thing to hear two Chinamen from different parts of China conversing together in Pidgin-English, their own dialects being incomprehensible one to the other. Amongst the funny expressions used may be quoted "bull or cow chilo," for a boy or girl; a clock is said to "walkee" when in motion, and a clergyman is spoken of as a "Number-one-go-to-heaven-man."

But the Chinaman of the Straits Settlements, like the Indian Babu, is very much above such infantine babble, and, indeed, prides himself upon the elegance and precision of his diction,

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making use of the very longest phrases and words, where the simplest and shortest would suffice. I once said to a Singapore Comprador:

"Comprador, I wantchee you catchee my six pots, number one, Chyloong ginger to send that England side."

The official listened with a dignified impatience, and then, in a voice of stern rebuke, said:

"I presume, sir, that the object of your interview with me, is to request me to obtain for you half-a-dozen vessels containing unimpeachable ginger from Chyloong, for the purpose of dispatching them to your venerated relatives at home."

After that, it is needless to say, I subsided, and for ever after treated Singapore Chinamen with respect.

The wonderful acuteness of Chinamen in matters pertaining to business has become almost proverbial—perhaps on account of the enormous amount of hocus-pocus and fraud which exists amongst themselves. The never-failing accuracy of the 'shroffs,' or clerks, in detecting base or unsuitable coin, is familiar to all who have had dealings with Banks in China. I remember once the P. and O. Steamer brought a large consignment of Bar Silver to one of the Shanghai Banks, and it was spread out under the verandah for the Comprador's inspection. He walked over it, calmly and deliberately, with his cigar in his mouth, every now and then directing a coolie to remove a particular bar. In every case, it was afterwards found, the bars thus set aside were of lower "touch" than the rest. The most experienced London bullion brokers could scarcely do this at sight, but would be obliged to have bits chipped off and sent to the Assayers.

But, from an English point of view, the Jappers are a far more estimable race, socially speaking, and regarded as individuals. They have none of that supercilious consciousness of superiority which makes Chinamen so odious; they are intensely fond of all active sports; they are brimful of wit and humour; they seem to possess the very essence of happiness and enjoyment; they are brave and chivalrous, and although less reliable than Chinamen, are much pleasanter fellows to have about one's house and person.

When we started football at Yokohama, ten years ago, the excitement and enthusiasm of the Jappers knew no bounds, whilst the same game in China would only have provoked pitying contempt and ridicule. With a little practise, we made the Japper coolies on our cricket field, excellent fags, as they never "funked" the ball; but the Chinese coolies on the Shanghai ground would watch the ball coming, gravely lift up their legs to let it pass them, and then scud after it, full of satisfaction at having performed a dangerous and arduous duty.

The nearest approach to an athletic sport which I ever saw in China, was a game much patronised by the youth on summer's evenings. They would form a circle, and one of them would kick a

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shuttlecock into the air with the back of his heel, it would be passed from one to the other with wonderful precision and agility, but this pastime could scarcely come under the category of a healthy, invigorating sport.

In Japan there is wrestling, and fencing, and gymnastics; a game played on pony back, very like our polo, and another equestrian game which merits a description. Two parties of half-a-dozen mounted men are chosen. One party wears stuck into their helmets small plates of red earthenware, the other has white plates. Each man is armed with a sturdy bamboo. At the given word the two parties meet in the midst of the arena, and commence belabouring each other's heads with the object of breaking the platters with all their might and main. The party losing the fewest platters is considered to have won the game. It may be imagined that no little adroitness and pluck, as well as skill in horsemanship, are required for this pastime.

At one regatta in Yokohama Bay, the Japanese crew belonging to the English Consulate beat, over a mile and a half course, all other competitors, including crews from the British, American, French, German, and Russian men-of-war in harbour.

It is curious that two nations, only divided from one another at one point by six hundred miles of sea, should be so utterly different in every respect. Their costumes are different, their language is entirely different, their appearance is different, their minds are differently constituted, their social habits and customs bear not the faintest resemblance, their manners are diametrically opposite, and yet to the men acquainted with both, it is ludicrous to note how, even in well-informed circles at home, the two are confounded together, and blended in the one comprehensive term "China."

FRANK ABELL.

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THE TRAINING QUARTERS OF SOME IRISH "CRACKS."

ONE of the prettiest spots in Ireland is the Curragh of Kildare—commonly called *The Irish Newmarket*—being surrounded upon all sides by training establishments, most of which are under excellent management. From Jockey Hall we miss John Hubert Moore, who declares that the removal of his magnificent stud to English quarters was mainly owing to the persecution which he suffered at the hands of the Curragh Ranger, who denied his right to exercise upon a piece of ground, which had been considered public property for upwards of fifty years. Whatever may have been the original cause of this fine old sportsman's retirement from Irish soil, his absence is regrettable, and from Jockey Hall his pleasant face and stalwart form are unhappily missed, despite the cheery presence and admirable *manège* of his son, Mr. Garrett Moore, better known as "Garry," who steered the Liberator to victory when that gaunt-limbed son of Daniel O'Connell secured the Grand National, and by so doing extinguished his chance of any future win, owing to the heavy impost which, in these days of peculiar handicapping, it was thought fair to lay upon him. Conyngham Lodge, presided over by Captain Joy—Melitta Lodge—and French House, the head quarters of Michael Dennchy—claim a passing mention, before we come to Athgarvan and Eyrefield lodges, the two most famous establishments upon the Curragh Edge. The former was for long the home of Mr. Allan M'Donagh, now a broken-down solitary man, the wreck of his former self, but once the finest trainer and most daring cross-country rider in the kingdom. He won the first Grand National ever run over the Aintree course, and secured twenty-two steeplechases on one mare, Brunette, the property of Mr. Preston of Bruree,—winning the Kilrue Cup three times in succession. At Athgarvan Lodge the best horses and the cheeriest company were ever to be found, and the beautiful wood through which the owner made an extensive and picturesque roadway at the back of the house, enabled him to keep his racers in condition throughout the winter time, when the neighbouring training-grounds were completely frost-bound. Mr. M'Donagh brought out many crack gentlemen-riders, some of whom were shining lights—and to all he supplied their first winning mounts. Amongst them

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may be mentioned Captain Tempest, Captain Raynor, Major Hutton, Captain Brown (killed steeplechasing a few years since), Captain Ricardo, Colonel M'Calmont, and Captain the Honourable Greville Nugent (otherwise "The Limb"), who shared the hapless fate of Captain Brown. Last, but by no means least, he trained and brought out Mr. Tommy Beasley, who, as a steeplechase rider, has been almost, if not quite, as successful as the popular Tinman has been upon the flat. As professionals Mr. M'Donagh introduced P. Gavin and George Gray—the former of whom, when scarcely more than a child, and weighing but 4st. 7lb., rode and won the Prince of Wales' Steeplechase at Punchestown, having for his mount the famous Blush Rose, bred and trained at Athgarvan. The Lodge itself is a curiously-built run-out cottage, which has been much altered and added to from time to time, and contains a magnificent dining-hall, in which George IV. was regaled upon substantial Irish fare, and shown from the windows the countless lights which blaze at night from the windows of the Curragh Camp. This historic old dwelling is now inhabited by Mr. W. Pallin, and is within a stone's-throw of the gates of Eyrefield Lodge, one of the pleasantest and most hospitable of country quarters.

As this home of Mr. Linde and the Beasley brothers has become famous all over the civilised world, a brief description may be of interest to those who have heard and read of it "across the main." Eyrefield Lodge is situated about two miles from the Newbridge Station, on the borders of the Curragh. Kildare is an excessively flat country, and a stranger expecting to get a good view from the top of Walsh's Hill, would be rather surprised at the height of that far-famed elevation! In this respect, the site chosen for Eyrefield has been a happy one, for the Lodge and its offices stand upon a prettily-wooded rising-ground, which is swept by every fresh breeze which crosses the undulating plain. The house is approached from the road by a short and neatly-kept sweep, and is a rather plain, unpretentious, one-story building, the apartments in which have the walls covered with racing prints and pictures, whilst over the mantel-piece at the head of the cosy dining-room, is an admirable likeness of Mr. T. Beasley, on old Game Bird, and to the right an excellent picture of Empress, the much-talked-of Grand National winner of 1880.

It is, however, in the stalls at the *rere* of the Lodge, their occupants, and the schooling-ground, that readers will be chiefly interested—and through these Mr. Linde, himself, courteously conducts the visitor.

The stables are situated in two yards, divided only by a range of stalls. The front "yard," as it is called, is immediately at the back of the Lodge itself, and on one side of it the saddle-room is built—likewise apartments for the men and boys; on the other side are roomy box stalls, and the square is completed by a range

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of stabling, wherein have been from time to time located such equine gems as Cyrus, Mohican, Empress, Woodbrook, Eyrefield's Pride, and Whisper Low—the world-famed winner of the great steeplechase at Auteuil.

A new and very complete range of stabling has been lately erected, supplying accommodation for about fifty additional horses. Excellent granaries run around the yard, over the stalls, the corn in which can be readily and frequently shifted, and thus preserved fresh and sweet. The schooling-ground, in which the two victors, Cyrus and Whisper Low, received their education, is adjacent to the stables. Its circuit is one mile and forty yards, and the track is carefully laid out over grass. The Empress of Austria expressed much admiration of it when she visited it a short time since. The fences are made up in exact imitation of those at Liverpool; but, in addition to the most formidable obstacles, a few of the "fly" order have been made, to suit the capabilities of young and raw ones, and at one point it rests with the discretion of the rider whether he will bring his mount over a stone wall, or a single bank beside it—a similar feature existing at the "double," and at the stiffest of the post and rails, and bullfinch obstacles, one of which strongly resembles the third fence into the country at Aintree: that formidable barrier which has so often proved fatal to the chance of a "National" favourite.

A very complete arrangement is the place where Mr. Linde brings his team to exercise in frosty weather. Just beside the garden there is a mound, surrounded with trees, and around it a path has been hollowed to the depth of several feet, wherein a horse can canter, quite out of view of everybody, save those who stand on the edge of the amphitheatre. When frost and snow appear, cartloads of manure are laid down upon this track, on which the entire fleet is kept going for exercise. The lads know exactly how many rounds go to make a mile, and to this excellent system Mr. Linde attributes much of his success, as his horses can always be kept in going condition, even in the severest winter weather.

NANNIE POWER O'DONOGHUE.

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REDWOOD'S REVENGE.

By THE REV. FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE, M.A.

Nick Redwood's gun, in the rafters brown,
  Lay idle many a day;
One night Nick Redwood lifted it down,
  And scoured the rust away.

A friend had sat for a pipe and chat,
  Might be an hour or so;
The clock struck ten, and he rose at that,
  With "Time for me to go."

Then Nick rose too, and a candle showed,
  And lounged the door beside,
Till he heard "Good-night" from the open road,
  And the steps grew faint and died.

Then he shut the door, and the great bolt drew,
  And fastened the bar so stout,
And the lumbering shutters clattered to,
  And blew the candle out.

Then, while he softly hummed or sung
  A hymn from the chapel-book,
From over the beam where the flitches hung
  The stout old gun he took.

He dipped a rag in a cup of oil;
  He sat in the red fire-light,
He rubbed the barrels with patient toil
  To gleaming mirrors bright.

No plate or screw did his fingers shirk,
  No inch of the walnut stock;
But they dallied as though they loved their work
  About the heavy lock.

They dallied and played with the heavy lock
  And the trigger most of all;
It seemed as he loved the click of the cock,
  And the snap of the hammer's fall.

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He loaded each barrel with bullets two,
Still humming his favourite hymn;
And now, the holes in the shutters through,
Stole hints of the morning dim.

He drew the shutters a foot aside—
'Twas hardly daylight yet,
But the skies were flushed with a glory wide,
And all the grass was wet.

Then he knelt him down beside the bed,
And clasped his hands to pray;
"Lord, prosper the work," was all he said,
"Bless Thou my hand this day."

A little grove of firs began
At the back of Nick's abode;
For fifty yards it straggled and ran,
Till it met the turnpike road.

'Twas early dawn—no soul astir—
The quiet neighbours slept;
Nick entered the wood, and from fir to fir
Without a sound he crept.

A bank of turf at the high-road's edge
Was fence on left and right,
And the white road sloped to a long-drawn wedge
At the furthest range of sight.

He crouched and crawled till he reached the bank,
Where a gorse-bush flowered a-flame;
And faint to his sense, as down he sank,
Its heavy odour came.

He lay on his face, and hardly stirred
Till six by the steeple-clock;
Then he rose to his knee, and with never a word
The trigger set full-cock.

He pointed the gun through the flowering gorse;
The long, bright barrels glowed;
And hark! far off the hoof of a horse
Rings faint on the dry, white road.

'Twas six o'clock in the mid-July,
Yet scarcely a bird had sung,
And overhead in the copper sky
The clouds in masses hung.

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There was not a breath to stir a bough,
Or shake the grasses weak;
The sweat-drops gathered on Redwood's brow,
And trickled down his cheek.

His swollen fingers loose his tie,
He draws his breath in pain;
He glances up at the stifling sky,
And longs for the blessed rain.

The hoofs ring clear—Nick cranes his neck,
And peers through the thick-flower'd gorse;
A moving dust-cloud—a growing speck—
At last, a man and horse.

Now near and clear on his straining ear
The clank of the horse-hoofs grows;—
Ah, not in vain has he crouched and lain—
'Tis the iron-gray he knows!

He stoops his head to the polished butt—
Along the barrels bright,
With tight-drawn lips and an eye half shut,
He looks to the brazen sight.

"O God of vengeance," Nick Redwood cries,
"O God of the flames of hell,
Flash down Thine Arm from yon thunderous skies,
And speed Thy message well!"

On comes the gray with a spanking stride—
Her flank is full abreast;
Nick's barrels cover the rider's side—
"Now, God, do Thou the rest."

His finger crooks on the trigger bright;—
There follows no crack of gun,
But sheer from the sky one flash of light—
Thunder and flash in one—

One long straight shaft from the cloven sky—
God's Arm that flashes bare—
The mad steed tears with his rider by;
Nick Redwood's standing there.

His finger still on the trigger crooks—
His cheek to the stock inclined,
Along the barrel his wild eye looks—
Blind—stone-blind!

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A PASTORAL.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

NEIGHBOURS.

THE Manor Farm might, from its prosperous appearance, as fitly have been named the Manor House, and the seat of Stephen Hilton, Esqre.

The sloping, lichen-crusted, red-tiled roof was flanked on either side by two wide chimneys, further embellished by four Dormer windows, blinking solemnly, like two pair of near-sighted eyes, upon the surrounding country; twelve small square-paned windows in white frames flashing merrily in the sunlight from under the overhanging eaves, richly ornamented with swallows' nests, made an imposing line of light along the upper story. The lower rooms, connected by a verandah and trellised porch, opened upon a raised stone terrace, thence a low flight of broad steps led to the prim, old-fashioned flower garden, where quaintly trimmed hollies and dragon-shaped yews bore evidence of Dutch William's influence upon British horticulture. In summer, verandah and house were hidden beneath clustering, creamy-white roses, and a splendid Maréchal Niel showered down heavy golden flowers and opening buds in lavish profusion; the back of the house was covered with closely cut ivy, framing in bright green, numberless windows of all shapes and sizes.

House and garden stood surrounded by fields studded with trees, adding park-like beauty to the meadows; elms, beeches, and oaks, varied by tall straight pines, formed a crescent, whence an extensive view was obtained of undulating ground, and a rich pasturage, dotted with white cottages, and fertile hop gardens—the whole sloping gently down to a distant shining line of silvery sea. The boundary on one side was a belt of larch and a thick copse, above which towered the giant oaks, dividing the Manor Farm meadows from the Manor House park.

To Stephen Hilton belonged many a broad acre of well-cultivated land, rich meadows and the produce thereof in the shape of stacks of bean and clover, sweet-scented hayricks, besides goodly cattle and flocks of sheep. The outlying barns were well filled; the stables could show the finest carthorses in the county and a couple

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of good hunters and a lady's hack. The general air of prosperity and welldoing was a sign that Stephen, having put his hand to the plough, was not one to turn back. A good and liberal master, he was well served; popular, too, with all classes. Riding well across country, singing a good song in a mellow bass; a handsome, tall young fellow, strongly built and active, with yellow hair and dark blue eyes, he was a type of the Man of Kent. Generous and kind, albeit quick tempered and dictatorial, a gentleman in all his dealings and ways, he yet lacked, somewhat of the refinement which comes from a scholarly education and much reading: nevertheless, a keen appreciation of nature and a certain artistic perception, caused him to shrink somewhat from the rough boorish surroundings amid which he and his sister, Janet, were placed.

Miss Hilton, two years older than her brother, was a genial, bright, practical woman of thirty, too busy to trouble her head with more literature than her Bible; content to leave the newspaper to her brother, from whom she would glean stray scraps of information or gossip duly filtered by passing through his manly intellect, one she deemed alone fitted to cope with the vexed questions of the day.

The other inmate was an orphan girl, Cécile Bellamy, distantly related to them. Tom Bellamy, her father, a cousin of the Hiltons, having settled in Bordeaux, as clerk in a wine merchant's office, had married his principal's only child, and in due time inherited his father-in-law's business and money.

After a few brief years of married happiness his wife died, leaving him with an infant. At his death, which happened a few years later, Stephen Hilton found his cousin had bequeathed the child, a girl, Cécile, to his care. He, it was who brought the lonely little stranger to England, placing her in Janet's arms, to love and cherish as a sister. Not until long after, when the child had shot up into a tall and stately maiden and nearly attained her eighteenth year, did she realise that Stephen was not her brother.

About the same time she made another discovery, a painful one to her pride. The unpalatable truth dawned upon her that she was less welcome, not at home, but at the Manor House, the residence of Colonel and the Lady Adeliza Hawthorne. The Colonel was squire of Westerham, and for untold generations there had been friendly intercourse between the Squire of the House and the yeoman of the Farm. Now, there was a subtle, an almost imperceptible change; not as regards the Squire and Stephen, but, with the womenkind. Cécile felt, but could not define the difference which lay in Lady Adeliza's manner, a certain dash of hauteur was infused in her greeting to the girl, who found herself, without knowing why, "out in the cold."

Miss Hawthorne and her sister Mabella had less freedom and

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were more frequently engaged than of old; their only brother, Nugent, openly voted "life an intolerable burthen at home, and ever so much jollier at the Farm"—an imprudent remark, tending to renewed watchfulness on the part of his lady mother, and a determination to "guard the dear boy from the wiles of the artful designing beauty, and the innocent girls from the possibly evil results of too great an intimacy with a handsome, uncultivated yokel such as Stephen Hilton." "The poor darlings and the dear boy" were staunch to their friends, and enthusiastically raved about Cécile's golden hair and luminous grey eyes, or the feats of daring and prowess by field and flood of the blue-eyed Thane, as they dubbed Stephen.

Lady Adeliza resolved to repress, if she could not stamp out the fatal tendency to hero worship; in her distress she even forgot herself so far as to confide to the Colonel that "the intimacy was *most* injudicious, and must not be encouraged, for Satan finds some mischief still for idle hearts to do."

Long years had taught the kind old man that it was useless to argue with my lady; in his heart he sympathised with the young people, feeling the dulness of the home circle, and sadly missing the bright joyousness, the life, freshness, independence, and it maybe wilfulness, which added in a marked manner to pretty Cécile's charms.

Things were in this uncomfortable state when the startling news ran through the village, that a small house, long untenanted and known as the "White Cottage" was taken; and almost before the neighbours had realised the facts of the bill, "To Let," being down, the house was cleaned, painted, the London vans unloaded, and the occupier, Mrs. Cunningham Crofts, a widow, and her daughter, in residence.

Not that it made much difference in the old world village of Westerham, as, with the exception of the Vicar and the Doctor, both bachelors, no one called upon the new comers.

Lady Adeliza Hawthorne was too cautious to expose her foolishly susceptible son to the fascinations of a possibly pretty and probably penniless husband-hunting girl, nor did she wish her plain daughters to act as foils to a new beauty. Miss Hilton, shy of strangers, and by nature a stay-at-home, was too busy to think of the usual etiquette, and Cécile, smarting under Lady Adeliza's well-bred and veiled impertinence, did not feel disposed to be looked down upon by "stuck-up people," and persistently avoided any chance meeting which might have led to an acquaintance.

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Chapter II.

PEACE AND GOODWILL.

The Christmas week had come, "all hands" were pressed to work at the church decorations. Evergreens, holly, ivy, symbols and coloured texts, and a few rare hothouse flowers from the Manor House conservatory, were being deftly woven and secured in all possible and impossible places, in and under and about the grey stone pointed arches of the fine old church; the rudely carved font of black basalt disappearing modestly under a load of tender blossoms and moss; the dark oak pulpit, enlivened, if not embellished, by illuminated scrolls and devices in glaring scarlet and white.

Cécile Bellamy, one of the busiest of busy workers, was arranging some pure white blossoms and sprays of maidenhair fern in the burnished vases, destined for the altar, when her attention was attracted by a small preliminary cough and "May I help you? I should so like to be useful. Oh, I forgot! you don't know me. I'm Una Crofts."

A pretty voice and a pretty face was Cécile's thought, as she looked up from her task and saw the large brown eyes raised wistfully in a beseeching manner hard to resist, but she determined to be true to her colours, her flag should not be lowered at the first attack, she therefore abruptly replied, "Oh, no, thanks."

The newcomer was not to be repulsed.

"Please don't say 'No.' Let me try and be useful. How artistically you are arranging those lovely flowers: I am sure you paint.—No," as Cécile shook her head. "Charming."

She took the vase from Cécile's unwilling hand and turned it round, lost in admiration. Cécile could no longer be ungracious, and pointing with a slight smile to a high ladder, she asked Miss Crofts to hand her up the wreaths.

"You never mean to say you're going up that giddy thing? Gracious! aren't you afraid? Oh, don't climb up, you'll fall; oh, let me call someone else!"

"Why? I'm not such a giddy girl as I look."

"Please, then, let someone hold it. No, not me, I couldn't! It turns me sick to think of it."

Cécile amused at the absurdly frightened look in Miss Crofts' face, beckoned to Stephen, who had come in and was evidently looking for her.

Laden with garlands, she nimbly mounted the ladder, and, quickly fixing the wreaths, reached down for more. Miss Crofts, holding them on high with some difficulty, owing to her fashionably tight attire, displayed to advantage a neat and well-formed figure. Stephen, dutifully holding the ladder, looked up the

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while fondly at Cécile, when a timid little half-stifled shriek startled him, and Miss Crofts exclaimed:

"Oh! I thought she was slipping, my heart gave such a jump; isn't she beautifully brave, like a bird on a bough, or like Blondin on the tight rope, you know."

Mr. Hilton didn't seem to know, but he smiled politely, not quite knowing what to say, and she continued:

"I forgot, your sister didn't introduce us. I must do so. Mr. Hilton let me introduce Miss Una Crofts," with a bow and a laugh. "Of course everyone knows *you*."

As she paused, he bowed, but not being a man of the world, nor indeed very ready of speech, said nothing.

Miss Crofts was, however, used to shy men, and went rattling on, in no whit abashed at his silence: "Poor mother is a sad invalid, and her doctor thought change of air might suit her; it's dreadfully healthy here, he says, so we came; of course I miss town, and find it quite too awfully slow; I don't know a soul, and never see anybody, unless souls and bodies are to be represented by the Parson and the Doctor, and they don't count, you know—they are interested."

"Interesting, did you say?"

"Oh! fie! Mr. Hilton;" Miss Crofts cast down her eyes (her lashes were straight and long) and tried to look becomingly confused, but finding the shot missed fire, she continued: "What a pet of a horse you ride. What do you call her?" Here the voice from above impatiently asked for more garlands, Miss Crofts supplied them, and Stephen amiably answered her last question.

"My horse is called Tom. Do you ride?"

"I adore it, but I don't get a chance *now*." The tone conveyed the idea that Miss Crofts had had endless horses at her beck and call.

Again they were interrupted, Cécile's voice gave warning, "Look out below."

The words were followed by a well-aimed sprig of prickly holly alighting on Stephen's head, and lodging in his thick curling yellow hair.

"Lucky I'm not bald," he said, with a laugh, echoed by Miss Crofts.

"Isn't she sweet! Oh! *do* you think your sister will take pity on a poor lonely old maid and come and see me? I can't call first you know; but will they come? I am so dull."

Stephen muttered words to the effect that "they would be delighted."

The voice from the heights called "Stephen, hold on, I'm coming down."

Miss Crofts hastily held up an armful of greenery to Cécile, who curtly remarked: "Thanks, I'm tired of decorative art."

She ran quickly down the ladder and, overlooking her cousin's

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outstretched hand, jumped the last few steps, and politely bowing her thanks to Miss Crofts and carelessly nodding to Stephen, she was hurrying away, when detaining her, he whispered, "Wait, Cécile, one moment, Miss Crofts wants to know when you can call?"

"I call! oh, no," and without looking at him she threw her cloak on and left.

Annoyed at her abrupt refusal and departure, he turned to find Miss Crofts gazing at him with an amused look in her dark eyes. Noting an angry gleam in the glance that met hers, she drew forth a lavender cased hand from a sealskin gauntlet, and delicately laid it in the brown, well-shaped hand he extended. Crushing her rings into her fingers in his hearty grasp, he was about to apologise for Cécile's behaviour, when she forestalled him, saying, with a winning smile:

"So kind of you to promise me a visit from your sisters; I shall be so glad to see them. I am always at home in the afternoon; I suppose *you* never find time for calls? Good-bye."

He bowed, and, as she watched him dash after Cécile, she murmured: "Express train, there'll be a collision, I fear."

Angry with her cousin and with Miss Crofts, Cécile was yet more angry with herself for her childish and undignified behaviour. She did not understand the confused feelings surging in her heart, and the hot blood rushed to her face, as she recalled the glance she had seen Miss Crofts bestow upon Stephen. Before meeting him she must be cooler and have her temper more under control. Why did he wish her to call? she asked herself again, as she tried in vain to walk herself into a more amiable mood. The cold was intense, the road sparkled under her feet, overhead and around her the hoar-frost glistened and shone, transforming every leafless branch and trembling spray into feathery beauty. Already the rapid exercise through the crisp air was soothing away her troubles; she hurried along the shining path past the diamond-crusted hedgerows with a lighter heart, when the hard, frozen ground, echoed with a distant sound of quick and hurried footsteps. With instinctive fear she hurried on, nor dared to look back; nearer and nearer came the pursuing steps, every moment the distance between them lessened—she was breathless with her haste—they gained upon her, and a few long strides brought Stephen to her side.

Hot haste had not cooled his temper. There was an arbitrary ring in his voice that brought Cécile to a standstill.

"Cécile, stay—how you run on, you know I wanted to speak to you." No answer from Cécile, only the blood rose ominously and flamed across her cheeks. Stephen angrily continued: "Did you understand that *I said* you would call upon Miss Crofts?"

"Did you understand that *I* said I would *not* call upon her?" Cécile's answer rang out aggressively.

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"Child! you must allow *me* to decide upon whom you shall visit."

She broke in hastily—"You may decide upon whom I may visit, you must allow *me* to decide whom I shall not visit."

Ignoring the angry interruption, he pursued:

"I must know best, and you have nothing to do but conform to my wishes. Say no more, only remember, it must be done. I have said my sisters would call."

"Your sister may call—I am *not* your sister." Stephen turned white. She continued, passionately: "Nor your dog to fetch and carry at your bidding."

His cheeks burned, but his glance never wavered; his eyes were bent upon her with a reproachful, wounded gaze; she bowed mockingly: "Good-bye, cousin Stephen, our ways are apart; you are going home—*I* shall return later."

With mingled surprise and anger Stephen watched her tall figure down the high road, until at the way-post, she struck into a side path, and, entering the wood, was out of sight. Pondering deeply upon the passionate outburst succeeded by her dignified farewell, he slowly retraced his steps, wondering and fidgetting at her strange behaviour.

Not until two hours later, did Cécile reach home, footsore and weary, but still defiant.

Chapter III.

A DIFFERENCE.

Henceforth, not peace, but rather an armed neutrality reigned between the cousins.

Janet, in obedience to her brother's wish, called upon Mrs. Crofts, and was charmed with the ladylike invalid, and agreeably impressed by the pretty daughter. Miss Crofts quickly returned the visit, and openly expressed her pleasure in making the Hiltons' acquaintance.

On many occasions she sought to melt the icy reserve in which Cécile had wrapped herself; in vain, the girl would not unbend, and Miss Crofts' amiability only acted as a foil to Cécile's ungracious manner, and served to show her conduct in a yet more repellant light.

With Miss Crofts' advent, the demon of discord had entered the once happy and united household.

Cécile solaced herself by encouraging her admirer, Nugent Hawthorne, to his great joy, and to his mother's intense, if suppressed wrath. Alarmed by the success of Cécile's wiles, she condescended so far as to invite Miss Crofts, hoping to find in her a willing auxiliary and a rival to Cécile's attractions.

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Stephen, blind to the fact that Cécile had reached the point "where brook and river meet," treated her as a capricious wayward child, watching her frivolous conduct apparently with the calm contempt of utter indifference.

Una Crofts' sprightly talk and delicate flattery, insensibly won him over to her side, and the little "rift within the lute" was widened by her judicious behaviour, in marked contrast with Cécile's ill-disguised sneers and sharp answers. Later on, Miss Crofts ingratiated herself so far with Stephen as to hope for success in one of her small pet schemes. She looked well on horseback, and had long wished to ride with Stephen, who sat his horse like a centaur, and was never seen to greater advantage than in the saddle. After much adroit manœuvring Stephen had somewhat reluctantly promised to see about giving her a mount, true, he added the saving clause of "some day," but Miss Crofts was not slow in following up her advantage, and henceforth he was at her mercy—there was no escape, and he boldly plunged into the subject one morning as, without looking at Cécile, he observed, in a would-be off-hand way "By-the-by, Miss Crofts would like to ride Rufus some day."

Hitherto Cécile had looked upon Rufus as peculiarly her own. She coloured violently, and bit her lip to keep back the angry rush of words, when Janet unexpectedly came to the rescue.

"You forget, Stevie, that Rufus is nervous and fidgetty; he wants a light hand. Una is a sweet girl, but can she ride?"

"She's sure to ride as well as she does everything else," Stephen perversely replied.

"I daresay she's never been for more than an arm-chair canter in the Row."

"Nonsense! I'll take care she doesn't come to grief; the question is—can she have the horse?"

This time he looked at Cécile. With well-acted surprise she raised her eyebrows. "Surely a man can do as he likes with his own."

"That's no answer," he said, impatiently.

"I have no other to give."

Janet shrugged her shoulders and left the room.

Cécile, not caring to brave the storm just then, hastily followed her, and, rushing into the garden, sought refuge under the shadow of the friendly pine-trees, and flinging herself down on the mossy ground, she sobbed out her grief.

Stephen, half counting upon Cécile's refusal to lend her favourite horse, was unprepared for her acquiescence, and her precipitate retreat barred the way to further parley. Sympathising with her more than he cared to say, he magnanimously resolved to reward her for her unselfish sacrifice.

At dinner, he therefore duly suggested a ride together to Rushbrook, an outlying farm, and one of the prettiest rides of the

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neighbourhood. Janet eagerly seconded the proposal. "Go, dear, and bring back some roses in your white cheeks."

The pallor she alluded to vanished as Stephen looked at Cécile; with glowing cheeks all aflame, yet with a tolerably steady voice, she curtly declined to accompany him.

Unaccustomed to a refusal, with a slight feeling of astonishment and incredulity, he condescended to coax her, saying, in a kind voice: "Do go, Cécile, Rufus will enjoy a good gallop, he is fresh and wants exercise."

The unfortunate remark called forth the bitter retort: "Do you want me to exercise him for Miss Crofts?"

Thoroughly annoyed, he was about to reply angrily, when further discussion was prevented by the maid entering to clear the table.

Cécile, taking up Janet's woolwork, sought refuge in the window recess, and ostentatiously busied herself with it, counting the stitches half audibly in a most worrying manner. Stephen, flinging himself into an arm-chair, was wrapped in the *Times*, behind which he disappeared. To the clatter and ringing of china and glass succeeded silence, unbroken save by the "two green, one red," in a low murmur from Cécile. After a while that too ceased, and Stephen, looking up from his paper, saw Cécile, her work unheeded by her side, idly gazing out. Something desponding in the girl's attitude struck him, and with a sudden pang, he determined once more to hold out the olive branch. At the rustle of his paper her hand went up quickly to her eyes, and without looking round, she bent over her work. "*Petite*," he began, *Petite* being like many pet names wholly unsuitable to the stately, queenlike maiden whom he now approached; gently he put his hand upon her shoulder, and with a smile repeated, "*Petite*, I do believe you are jealous!"

The random shot told. Impatiently shaking off his hand, with withering scorn she echoed the word "jealous!" adding: "Of a girl who makes eyes at, and runs after every boy she sees; or of a man whose soul is wrapped up in his horses and cattle. No, indeed! I've not fallen so low."

Stephen was taken aback. Had he been more conceited or of a more reflective nature he would have attributed her passion to the sting of truth in his lightly uttered words. As it was, muttering "Ficky things, women," he made one more attempt at peace.

"Cécile, will you not ride to please *me*?"

The voice was anxious, but the girl detected a triumphant ring in it, and coldly replied:

"Never more."

"*Petite*, look up and answer me."

Fearing he might read more in her eyes than she wished, she had hitherto kept them fixed upon her work; now, forced to do his bidding, with an effort, she slowly raised them to his, and,

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heedless of her burning cheeks, mechanically repeated the words "never more;" forcing herself to add in a light tone, though her lips were parched and dry, "Quoth the raven, never more."

There was a strange look in his eyes, a look she had never seen before, but ere she could fathom it, the door opened, and Miss Crofts, popping her head in, asked in a softly beseeching voice if she might come in.

"Miss Janet told me I should find you here, and I do so want to see you."

She looked at Stephen, and, nodding to Cécile, gave him her hand, and retaining his in a lingering clasp, continued:

"I do so want to thank you for your great kindness in suggesting my riding with you. Mother is so nervous, she would not let me ride unless I had a very safe cavalier." Here a look of gratitude beamed upon Stephen. "But how silly I am, I did not thank you half enough yesterday, and I cannot tell you how grateful I am for your generous offer of a horse, and yet—I am come to refuse."

Was there a relieved look in Stephen's eyes? Cécile certainly looked brighter.

"Isn't it hard. Doctor Browne says I want exercise without fatigue. He was so interested and kind, I really almost expected he would offer——"

"His hand and heart," Stephen interrupted.

"Oh, fie! Mr. Hilton, you make me blush. Of course, I should decline, as I did, his dog cart; driving isn't half so delicious as riding, and Doctor Browne is so different from——Ah! well, never mind;" as her eyes clearly filled in the omission, she archly proceeded: "and now I must confess my reasons for not accepting *your* offer; the fact is, I left all my bad habits in town, including my riding habit, and my hard-hearted tyrant of a mother won't hear of giving me a new one."

The tears sparkled in her eyes, as, with a comical look of distress, she turned to Cécile, and, carefully arranging her scanty draperies, sank upon the floor at her feet, and, clasping her hand, with a sudden inspiration whispered: "Oh! if you would only for once, you sweet child."

"Would what?" the child enquired, in any but a sweet manner.

"Lend me your habit, darling, only just for once. Of course it would be miles too big for poor little me, and want tucks all over it, width, length, breadth."

"I cannot lend it," Cécile began, and hesitated, shooting a side look at Stephen; with his back to her he was beating a tattoo on the window panes. Should she disappoint him? Yes or no? she had sacrificed her horse, why should her habit not follow suit?

She laughed drearily to herself. A momentary indecision, then with one of her customary little French shrugs of her shoulders,

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she smilingly repeated: "I won't *lend*, but I will give you my habit."

"No, really! you're joking?" Una could not trust her ears.

"You're welcome to it. I shall never use it; I've given up riding."

"Since when?" Una asked, curiously.

"Since I last rode, but please not to overwhelm me with thanks; remember my habit is not new. It was a birthday present nearly a year ago, and it has seen good wear if not tear."

"You darling! I won't look a gift horse or habit in the mouth," and gleefully she turned to Stephen, when, seeing he had slipped away, she too left, observing, as a parting shaft to Cécile, "You are looking wretchedly ill, poor dear."

Cécile slowly seeking her room, tenderly smoothed the habit; then quickly folded and addressed the parcel. With a weary sigh she recalled her delight at Stephen's kind thought in choosing it for her birthday present, only a short year since.

"I shall be eighteen in a few days. Looking wretchedly ill am I?" Seeing herself in the glass, she acknowledged the truth of Miss Crofts' remark, and sadly owned that she looked old and worn.

Chapter IV.

OF AGE.

On Cécile's eighteenth birthday she was up betimes, and in the garden before breakfast, gathering flowers. Stephen, watching from the window, was thinking how fair she looked; her dainty feet in strong shoes and silver buckles tripped lightly across the dew-drenched grass; her white linen gown was folded back over a short blue skirt; on her arm a basket filled to overflowing with luscious June roses, in her hand a great fragrant bunch of tall white lilies. He noted the loving care with which, as she passed on her way, she bent over the sweet flowers, and with a pang, he heard her voice; she was singing, but not in the bird-like carol of old; then the sunshine of her nature broke into liquid, silvery warbling and irrepressible snatches of blithe song; now, it was a plaintiff melody, making his heart ache with the sadness underlying it. What cloud had come over his darling to shadow her bright life? He called her, when, with a nervous start, she let the lilies fall, and, stooping to gather them, she obeyed his summons. Her cousin's greetings were warm and kind, and she coloured with pleasure, and when, upon entering the breakfast-room, she saw the birthday offerings awaiting her, she smiled the bright, sunny smile of old. A knitted scarf, fine and filmy as a cobweb, Janet's work for her pet, was hailed with delight, and, kissing her impulsively, she exclaimed:

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"You darling old Janet, how sweet and how sly you've been, never to let me see you working at it."

Then slowly opening a little box, her eyes beamed, she gave a quick, loving glance at Stephen, and taking out a heavy silver bangle, she slipped it over her hand, and said, gravely:

"I shall never take it off."

Janet looked on with admiration.

"I really think dear old Stevie deserves a kiss for his pains."

Cécile turned scarlet, then, bending suddenly, lightly touched his hand with her lips. Quickly he drew it away; had she looked up she would have seen him turn white, as he answered his sister with an effort:

"Too old for that sort of thing; you forget *Petite* is of age."

"Bless the child, it seems only yesterday she was a tiny dot of a baby, running after you and crying in her pretty French tongue: '*Etiénne, embrassez, petite,*' and here she is at man's estate. Only the other day I was trying to make Una see how it was that she would be of age at eighteen; but it was of no use, she shook her little head obstinately, and observed: 'If you weren't twenty-one, you ought to be. A maid of Kent, shouldn't be made of age before other people.'"

Stephen laughed, and, turning to Cécile, said:

"When you've finished breakfast, come into my den, and I'll initiate you into the mysteries of drawing and signing cheques—only you mustn't be carried away by the idea that a hundred a year will go as far as if it had another nought added."

Cécile jumped up and merrily followed Stephen, when Janet called to them.

"Don't forget the play to-night, and remember to call for Una. I've given her my place."

Cécile pouted and the brightness died out of her face, as Stephen remarked, "The more the merrier."

She angrily retorted: "We sha'n't be more, and we sha'n't be merrier. Miss Crofts takes dear Janet's place, selfish thing."

"Sorry I spoke," Stephen said; "but don't you think as it is your birthday, you might be a little more forgiving and pleasant?"

"Do you mean forgiving to you and pleasant to Miss Crofts? Well! you certainly are very trying; but we won't quarrel on my birthday."

A hollow truce, for before the day was over, Cécile felt there could be no peace between them.

That evening, a long-standing engagement with the Hawthorne's was to be carried out. The daughter of Miss Hawthorne's governess, rather than follow her mother's steps, preferred earning her daily bread on the stage. Not inheriting her mother's talent for teaching, she had elected to become an actress, in what Lady Adeliza was pleased to call "a misguided moment of inspiration." After many years of hard work, she was steadily rising

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in the profession, and in the provinces was playing leading parts at five guineas a week.

Lady Adeliza and the Hiltons having promised to grace the performance at the county town with their presence, now made their way to Aldbury to see Miss Latouche as *Pauline Deschapelles* in the "Lady of Lyons."

Cécile, not having counted upon Una's company, had persuaded Stephen to drive them over in the pony-chaise; the night was fine, and the moon silvery bright; but, alas for Cécile's looked-for enjoyment, Una sat in the place of honour by Stephen's side and as she rattled on incessantly, Stephen's hearty laugh showed ready sympathy with her wit and amusing talk. In the back seat, Cécile felt solitary and dull, and scarcely disposed to respond to Stephen's occasional attempt to include her in Una's brilliant conversation.

Fast as the horse trotted, she would fain have him go yet faster, the quicker to end their drive. At last they reached their destination and met the Manor House party; Lady Adeliza cleverly managed to place Miss Crofts between Stephen and her son, Cécile next to the Colonel and herself. The arrangement was to Una's satisfaction; she looked well, and was in great force, and in vain her ladyship tried to put down the irrepressible girl. At last, leaning across Cécile, she whispered, in an acid tone, to the Colonel. The two words in her remark distinctly audible were "bad style."

Cécile, seemingly intensely interested in Pauline's troubles, was chafing and miserable, trying to obtain comfort from the old saying running in her tired head:

"Be the day ne'er so long
At last cometh even-song."

At last the performance came to an end, wraps were donned, preparatory to a sortie from the heated atmosphere.

The Colonel suggested taking one of the young ladies in their carriage, and as Nugent, to prevent his mother's possible objection, hastily notified his intention of going on the box to smoke, Lady Adeliza was obliged to second her husband's amiable offer. Cécile eagerly begged that Miss Crofts might be spared the long fatiguing drive, as she was in the doctor's hands, and far from strong, but her polite thoughtfulness was firmly declined; Una whispering as she did so to Cécile, that sitting back always made her sick. Cécile resigned herself to the inevitable, and, fearing to reveal her secret to her rival, promptly accepted the Colonel's escort, and meekly took her place beside Mabelle Hawthorne. Ere starting, she looked back to see Una standing under the portico, her beauty enhanced by the moon's white softening light, Stephen's arms around her, tenderly wrapping her in a shiny scarf of silvery material, her rosebud lips uplifted, dangerously near his.

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Only too well she knew the languishing look in the dark eyes turned from her upon Stephen, and with a pang she divined the fire lurking in his downcast glance. Blinded, and half mad with burning jealousy, she sought in vain to forget. In the silent watches of the night, she took a sudden resolution.

Two days later Cécile was missing, Stephen was wretched and gloomy, Janet miserable, Una sympathetic, but hopefully cheerful, Nugent inquisitive, Lady Adeliza shocked but relieved.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

PROPOSALS.

"CHARMING! isn't she?" Captain Wylde observed to Count St. Léon.

"Very lovely and exquisite, *timbre de voix*," was the reply, as Miss Bell's melodious voice thrilled the hearts of her audience. Not until the sweet tones died away in a faint echo was the breathless silence broken by a thunder of applause.

The fascinating actress was recalled, and as she bowed her thanks, a shower of bouquets fell at her feet.

Since Cécile left Westerham, two years have slowly passed, during which she had neither seen nor heard of her family. She had written, withholding her address, and Stephen and Janet were forced to be content with the bare fact of her drawing a monthly cheque upon her banker. In the meanwhile she had gradually worked her way uphill, playing the smallest parts, earning the smallest pay. Her painstaking, intelligent study had raised her from the Nerissaus to the Portia; however in the one part of Ophelia only, had she made anything of a hit. Her fresh voice, clear and silvery, was heard to advantage in the plaintive, touching old world ditties, even her somewhat tame acting suited the simple lovelorn maiden, and her manager, Herr Hofmann, was satisfied with her refined beauty and picturesque appearance. Had she cared more for her Art, she might have done better; as it was, she felt herself, success was due rather to her youth and good looks than to her talent.

Night after night, when Miss Bell was announced to play, Captain Wylde's stall was filled, and she regularly received a bouquet of the choicest flowers "the Garden" could boast. The professional ladies and the ladies of the ballet, looked enviously upon "The Duchess" as they called her, openly envying and secretly hating her for her brilliant conquest of the Honourable Hervey Wylde, Lord Fortescue's brother—a desirable *parti*, even in the husband hunting ground of the sacred precincts of Belgravia.

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This evening the usual floral offering had an unusual accompaniment, a small velvet case, containing a golden bracelet, studded with precious stones.

Cécile had not lost her old trick of blushing, and the hot blood rushed to her face, albeit there was no one near to witness the offering.

Sharply she closed it and put it from her, then, with a low cry of pain, fell to wondering how best to return the hateful gift.

She was called, and hastily slipping it into her pocket, she hurried on to the stage, to go through her part as best she could, troubled how to behave with becoming dignity in her new and trying position.

The play over, as she was leaving, Volonius detained her and spoke: "

"Presuming upon our kinship, fairest Ophelia, permit me to present to you this, our good friend and gallant warrior, Captain Wylde— Miss Bell."

Her admirer stood before her.

Bowing a trifle lower than he possibly would to a "lady," Captain Wylde expressed his delight at the long wished for introduction.

"I, too, am glad, as it relieves me of a difficulty and this."

Miss Bell opened and offered him the velvet case with its glittering contents.

"Miss Bell, you will honour me, I hope, so far as to wear a trifle I ventured to offer as a tribute of my great regard and," he hesitated and added, "esteem."

"Wishing to retain your esteem, I am sure, Captain Wylde, you will understand my motive in returning this very handsome token of your regard."

The luminous grey eyes were fixed steadily upon the young man's face; as he drew back an angry flush rose in her cheeks, the dark brows frowned, and with a stately gesture, she laid the gift in his reluctant hand, and was turning away in silence, when, seeing his mortified look, she added: "I must thank you for this beautiful bouquet. I am very fond of flowers—these, I will keep." Bowing and gracefully gathering up her long white draperies, without another word, she left him.

Lovingly his eyes followed the tall girl whose beauty had strangely bewitched him, and whose quiet and dignified manner had made him feel somewhat ashamed of himself. Wondering at her behaviour, he lost no time in talking it over with St. Léon. That worthy diplomat in embryo (unpaid *attaché* at the French Embassy) decided it was extreme art, hidden under an extremely artless exterior.

"*Elle ira loin*," was his verdict.

Somewhat suddenly, Miss Bell became the fashion and was made

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much of and run after by great ladies; readings by Miss Bell were the rage and her name was sufficient to ensure success.

Captain Wylde had many opportunities of meeting her in his world, and of judging, if he or his friend St. Léon were in the right. As he became more hopelessly in love, he sought in vain to convert the Count to his opinion. St. Léon never believed in women, *de par le monde*, still less in stars of *le demi monde*. Whether the Méphisto were less clever or the Faust firmer, neither succeeded in converting or perverting the other to his views, and as the season advanced, Captain Wylde made an offer of his hand and his heart, and a smaller golden circlet in lieu of the one returned by the offended actress.

Refusing to take an answer other than by word of mouth, he had begged for an interview, and was duly admitted and ushered up the dark, narrow stairs leading to his idol's shrine. The temple was in a tiny house at Kensington Gore, one of the few remaining to recall the good old days of hoops, powder and patches. The boudoir was a low room lighted by one large window opening upon a balcony of trellis work, covered and festooned with a green veil of graceful creepers. A fragrant scent of mignonette mingled its fresh sweetness with the rich perfumes of luscious tuberoses and jasmines. The room was filled to excess with flowers; standard laurels, orange and lemon trees, white and pink camellias stood in every nook and corner; baskets and bowls full of roses were placed upon brackets and shelves. The fire-place was a bower of white lilies, raising their sceptred heads from some rare old porcelain jars. Near a low chair, on a velvet covered table, stood in a vase the last night's bouquet. With a thrill of joy he noticed it and augured favourably of the sentence he was anxiously awaiting.

Curtains and coverings were of white dimity; on the floor, fine India matting with here and there a Persian rug of white and blue. The table was covered with a rich blue cloth heavy with gold and silver embroideries. Pictures there were none, save only a large photograph, framed in silver. A man's head, massive, well-cut features, light eyes under straight dark brows, tawny hair waving over a broad, low forehead, the mouth hidden by a heavy moustache. What was this man to Miss Bell? Absorbed in thought a light footfall failed to rouse him and he fairly started at seeing the object of his meditation standing before him with hand outstretched in greeting.

Earnestly and well he pleaded for the love he hungered for. In answer, she told him the short story of her life and love, her passionate jealousy, her flight from home and subsequent career. Her voice faltered, and clasping her hands with sudden energy, she exclaimed:

"I am so tired! Oh! if I could be free! I am longing for a breath of pure air, pining for a sight of green fields and

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flowering hedgerows, the light and shadow of the clouds passing over the open downs, and distant hills, the wind-borne fragrance of the newly-mown hay. I am country bred, this town atmosphere stifles me, I shudder at the eternity of endless streets, stretching far away and leading whither: to that bare, mockery of country, the hateful suburbs."

She had forgotten her suitor's presence, she gave a heavy sigh, and the Captain, longing more than ever to bear her away to the ancestral halls, one day to be his own, begged earnestly to be allowed to take her from a life so distasteful to her.

Miss Bell pointed to the portrait. "You forget."

"No, it is for you to forget, if, as you say, he is married, you must in time forget him. You are too young to sacrifice yourself to a fancied first love, and since the Fates are against your marrying the man you love, why not marry the man who loves you?"

"Do not tempt me."

Marking the hesitation in her voice, his eyes flashed with passionate love, and certain of success, he lost his self-control, and boldly advanced to fold her in his eager arms. She swayed back, and eluded his embrace, and, frightened at the passion she evoked, warded him from her, with a pleading gesture full of dignity.

"Do not press for an answer. Give me time, if you will wait.——"

"Wait! I will wait for you for seven years, if you so will it."

She shook her head.

"Not for years but, oh! forgive me, I must see him again. Next month we are to play in the provinces, I shall be near my old home, and——"

She broke down with a gasping sob.

Captain Wylde said, gently:

"You will write, and tell me when I may see you?"

"Stay, I can tell you now. We play at Aldbury on the 28th and 29th. If after *that* you still wish for my answer, I will give it. Good-bye."

"So be it." Warmly he kissed the hand lying passively in his, and murmuring "*sans adieu*," he went his way neither hoping nor despairing, but waiting.

Chapter II.

"Be thou pure as snow and chaste as ice,
Thou shalt not escape calumny."

Breakfast was over at the Manor Farm, yet Stephen Hilton's letters and newspapers were left unopened beside his plate. The teapot, decorated with an ornamental and highly embroidered cap, was steaming away under cover. The urn still hissed upon the

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table. The chair facing him was pushed away; an empty cup and an open letter showed that the mistress had breakfasted, and that the master was late.

The sharp trot of a horse, and the deep bark of a mastiff announced him, and after a few minutes Stephen entered. Older looking than the two years that have passed should have made him; although, as yet, no silver lines were among the waving golden curls, clustering around the white forehead and temples; the dark brows frowned more readily, the blue eyes were less merry than of old, and the smile more rare. He was graver and more serious than his years warranted. As he entered the deserted room, a whiff of new mown hay came floating in through the open window, filling it with a sweet, fresh fragrance, and involuntarily his thoughts flew to the absent one—how childishly happy she had been in the harvest; he sighed, and sighing turned to his letters, not many, two only lay beside the daily papers; but at the sight of one the blood mounted to his forehead; he recognised "her writing."

For a moment the strong man was unnerved; day by day he had been hoping for this, until hope was dead in his heart, and he believed she was forgotten, as she had forgotten.

Seeing her writing, he knew his error. Shaken by emotion, he held the letter unopened, striving to quiet the nervous excitement possessing him, then, with trembling hands, he tore open the envelope.

A playbill—what mockery! Stay, a few words begging him to be at the performance on Thursday and after the play to ask at the stage door for Miss Bell. Thursday, why that was yesterday; by what mischance had the letter been delayed?

He rang and ordered his horse at once; as he did so, Janet entered.

"What, off again, Stevie, and without your breakfast? This will never do—sit you down while I give it you; tell me, whither away?"

Stephen was morally forced into a chair, and his sister, pouring out the tea and surrounding him with dainties, hovered about like an amiable bird; to please her he swallowed some food, she mechanically tidied the letters and papers littering table and floor.

"Oh! theatricals again at Aldbury. 'Merchant of Venice'—how long is it since you and I went to the play? Let me see, it was—oh! years ago, I remember, when——"

Janet stopped abruptly, before mentioning Cécile's name, and to cover her confusion, read aloud: "Herr and Mrs. Hoffmann as *Shylock* and *Portia*, a *German Jew!* I shouldn't care to see him, I'd rather go to-night, he'll be better in 'Hamlet.' *Ophelia*, Miss Bell, *Queen*, Mrs. Hoffmann."

"*Ophelia* by whom did you say?" Stephen asked, in a strangely quiet voice.

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"*Ophelia*, Miss Bell."

"Bell, and did you say to-night?"

"Yes, 'Hamlet' is for to-night only."

Stephen gave an involuntary start.

"Why, Stevie, how white you are. What is it?"

"Nothing. I feel a little faint."

Staggering to the window, he leaned his head upon his hand.

"It's riding upon an empty stomach; you are so imprudent, dear."

Stephen groaned bitterly. Cécile, his darling, on the stage—an actress; well, he would do her bidding.

He ordered his horse back to the stables, and the dog-cart to be ready at six o'clock, and a fur rug to be added. Janet was a wise woman, and asked no questions, but she was much exercised in her mind at the saddle-horse being countermanded for the cart and the fur rug.

"Shall you be late to-night, dear?"

"Yes—Don't sit up. I'll take the key.

* * * * *

Enter *Ophelia*.

Cécile's heart gave a great throb of joy, as her searching, wistful gaze fell upon Stephen's face. For a moment she was speechless. The audience, attributing her confusion to timidity, applauded her warmly, until roused from her dream, and recovering her self possession, she spoke.

The face she yearned for drew her irresistibly to it, again and again her eager glances fell upon the massive head and thoughtful countenance of the man whose steadfast eyes were never taken off her face. With an effort at last she turned away, conscious of a fixed, watchful stare from Stephen's neighbour in the stalls; with a shiver she recognised Hervey Wylde. To the flush of joy at seeing Stephen succeeded an ashy pallor. The man she loved, and the man who loved her, were before her. In that moment she knew that time had not weakened, could never weaken, the feeling that had grown and strengthened with her growth. Come what may, she must be true, if not to him to herself; she could not marry him, she would not marry another.

Mechanically she went through her part. Only in the songs the faltering pathos of her voice might reveal her suffering, and at least one among the audience interpreted it rightly.

Recalled again and again, she was led on by Herr Hoffmann; a bouquet of choice white flowers fell at her feet; she turned to acknowledge the attention, and bowing slightly to Captain Wylde, the donor, her eyes met Stephen's earnest glance, she blushed deeply; did she read their message aright?

The applause jarred upon Stephen, who madly wished to rush upon the stage and bear her away from the admiring spectators.

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It was a relief when the curtain dropped, and he was only haunted by the sweet music of her voice. He closed his eyes to shut out the surroundings, and be alone with the lingering echoes of her thrilling tones, the vision of her wondrous beauty, when his reverie was rudely broken by a boyish voice, from the stall behind him:

"Isn't Miss Bell the Belle of Belles."

"Rather Pearl of Pearls," sneered another deeper, older voice; and, as Walpole says, "Every pearl has its price."

"Come, old chap, you're libellous; she's as good as she looks, and that's saying a precious deal."

"Looks! God bless the boy, don't trust to looks! D'ye see that fellow just gone out? Well, d'ye know him? That's Wylde."

"Wylde, and who is Wylde?"

"Wylde, Wylde, that is to say, he was Hervey Wylde, of the 13th Light, now he's Lord Fortescue—uncle or brother just dead."

"Just dead, and he here, by Jove, I call it indecent."

"Why, man alive, he's come to look after the priceless pearl; he worships the ground she treads on."

"And she?"

"She, ah! ah! wouldn't look at Wylde, but smiles upon Lord Fortescue; they say they're married—fool!"

"Hang it, what mercenary things women are. I don't wonder at him, she'd grace a coronet."

"Or disgrace it."

"I thought she was making eyes our way."

"Happy Briggs, he thought she was making eyes our way—happy but deluded Briggs—well, so she was. Hush! here comes the elect."

Stephen Hilton looked up as Lord Fortescue entered and passed him with a murmured apology; he reluctantly acknowledged he was a gentleman, and a man a woman might love, but not Cécile—his Cécile.

Chapter III.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

Ophelia was off, and Cécile's work over, she was alone with her thoughts. Motionless she sat in her dressing-room, still in the costume she had worn in the play; the white clinging draperies fell around her in heavy folds, and but for the bright yellow hair faintly lighted by the rays of a gleaming lamp placed on a deal table near her and the dark grey eyes shining in the wan face, there was a total absence of colour; the joy and brightness had given place to a lurid, dusky fire lurking in the depths of the wondering eyes, seeking in vain for the reason of the change in Stephen. What had happened to drive the happy light from his

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countenance and make his dim glance meet hers with a searching distrustful enquiry, a hopeless reproach, in marked contrast to the flash of joy she had seen when he had recognised her. And now?

Dazed and stupified she sat before the empty grate, dimly conscious of waiting for something or someone. Was this to be the end of the waiting and wearying and longing?

Time passed. A knock—the door opened. Without looking up or changing her forlorn drooping attitude, she felt his presence. At a glance Stephen, for it was he, took in the scene; the desolate white figure, the bare whitewashed walls, the flickering light. Was this the successful actress, the triumphant Lady Fortescue? Margaret in her prison could not be sadder than the hopeless and crushed girl before him.

"You wished me to come; was it to congratulate you?"

She shivered at the sound of his voice, the cold tone condemned her and rang a knell to any faint hope she might have had of a possible reconciliation. She knew she had sinned beyond forgiveness—an actress was an outcast in his eyes. She looked up, his face was pale and stern, her head drooped and she burst into a passion of tears.

Stephen was irresistibly drawn to her in her misery, nearer and nearer he approached the sobbing girl, and bending over her, with a caressing gesture, his tawny moustache mingled with her golden hair, two trembling little hands were on his arms, slowly creeping up, until they met clasped round his neck, and with a low cry of joy, the shining golden head nestled confidingly on his breast, and the quivering sobs were hushed in a long lingering kiss.

Suddenly Cécile shuddered and drew back, and Stephen abruptly freed her from his embrace. The thought of Una and Fortescue came between them.

Their confusion and embarrassment was interrupted by a knock, followed by a shrill voice.

"If you please, Miss Bell, Lord Fortescue's compliments and he wants to see you; and Mrs. Hoffmann says as how she can't wait longer, and his lordship will see you home."

Cécile flushed scarlet, Stephen looked black as thunder, his brows bent in an ugly frown. She clasped her hands beseechingly and, with a sudden impulse, said: "Take me home, Stephen, dear Stephen, take me home."

He was silent.

In evident distress and terror, she leaned forward, and humbly touched his hands with her lips, murmuring faintly: "Save me."

Touched by her grief, he went to the door and called to the retreating messenger.

"Tell your mistress, Mr. Hilton will see Miss——the young lady home and will call to-morrow to explain."

Turning to Cécile, he inquired in an icy tone:

"What is your answer to Lord Fortescue?"

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She was dumb, and he added: "Give the same message to Lord Fortescue."

The maid left, and he sternly repeated his question.

No answer from the girl, who cowered before his wrath, her face hidden by her hair.

Roughly he laid his hand upon her arm:

"Cécile I must have your answer. That man has a right to it, I will have it."

Pushing back her hair, she lifted a white stricken face to his: "Stephen, you hurt me."

He groaned aloud in the bitterness of his anguish and then turned from her and would have left, but she stood between him and the door, and, looking him in the face, replied with a touch of the old spirit, "What right have you to an answer?"

Stephen's white face turned a dusky red as, putting her gently aside, he held out his hand:

"Do not let us part in anger."

"Part!" Cécile echoed, a world of misery in her voice. "No, Stephen, not part, take me home, if only for one night, I'll do anything you tell me, I'll come back if I must to-morrow."

Stephen stood irresolute.

"You promised to see me home, Stephen. Where would you take me but to the old home? I am so miserable."

He could not withstand her pleading.

Impatiently jerking down her hat and cloak from a peg, where his quick eye had seen them, he hurried her along the narrow dimly-lighted passage leading to the stage door. The dog-cart was waiting, Stephen helped her up, and, carefully drawing the fur rug around her, drove off at a rapid pace.

Neither spoke as they rattled over the stones through the quiet, sleepy town.

Cécile, nestling closely to Stephen's side, gave herself up to the charm of the fleeting moment, and, banishing care, breathed a happy little sigh as she passed the familiar hedgerows, and felt the wind blowing freshly across the bleak marshes.

Not until the bridge is crossed and the steep hill fronts them does he slacken rein, and looking round sees his companion's face less troubled and more as it dwelt in his faithful memory. There is almost a happy ring in her voice, as she softly asks "how Janet is?"

His mind at that moment not being with his sister, he answers shortly:

"Well."

"Yes, but how is she looking, as sweet as of old?"

"Older than of old, and she's gone white or whity brown since you left, little one."

Cécile sighed. "And how are the Hawthornes Aleathea and Mabella, and the dear old Colonel and the Dragon?"

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"All abroad, but you don't ask after your special friend and faithless admirer, Nugent, and dear Una!"

Cécile made a decided "moue," but Stephen considerately looking ahead, continued:

"Una, you know, is married and very happy."

A small voice replied "Yes."

A pause, and straightway the two fell a thinking, she of Una, he of Lord Fortescue.

Reverting from the past to the present and future, he exclaimed, as he flicked the horse: "By George! what will he say to my running away with you?"

The horse started off, Cécile's voice faintly echoed, "What will she say to your running away with me! Oh! Stephen, I forgot, do you care very much?"

Gravely came the answer: "No good comes of interfering between man and wife."

The gladness died out of her face: "Stephen we have done wrong; I must be brave and go back."

She shivered, and he looked savage. "Too late, for to-night, dear, you are safe, we must let the morrow take care of itself."

"Oh! forgive me for my thoughtlessness, I never remembered that you loved her."

"Loved her! Who?"

"Una."

"Mrs. Nugent!"

As Cécile divined her error, the lovelight glowed in her eyes, her face was transfigured with happiness, slipping her arm confidingly in his, she murmured, "Do you not love her?"

"Love Mrs. Nugent Hawthorne?" he enquired, again, sternly repressing the longing he had to fold her in his arms.

In the stillness of the summer night, he heard a low whisper: "Not Una, but me."

"Lady Fortescue?"

"No, me, Cécile Bellamy."

He stopped his horse, seized her in his arms, and lifting her blushing happy face to his, by the clear light of the moon he looked into her speaking eyes; the dark lashes closed over them, but not before he had read their secret.

R. A. LEA.

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TALMA.

A CHAPTER FROM FRENCH HISTRIONIC STORY.

By A. H. WALL.

When the storm-clouds of the last century's great French revolution were darkening, with terrible rapidity, the stage did not escape their influence. Play bills began to be headed "By Order of the People," instead of "By the King's Command," the word national to be substituted for royal, and on the stage itself the most absurd and illogical interpolations were uttered in the way of clap-trap ultra-republican sentiment.

M. Fleury, in his Memoirs, says that so little regard was paid to consistency by the literati of the commune that had Mahomet appeared upon the stage, they would have compelled his representative to adorn his turban with a tri-coloured cockade. He says, "How bitterly in those days did I bemoan the actor's cruel fate. . . . . How pitiable was the condition of an actor of genius compelled to submit to the caprice of such spectators! They wanted they knew not what. The piece might be thought inappropriate; the performer's patriotism might be doubted. My hand trembled as it applied the rouge to my cheeks, in dread of those vulgar attacks to which the next moment would subject me." Then, too, the green-room had become a kind of political club, and "Thalia and Melpomene wept," says the great French comedian, "to see their sacred altars profaned by party *brochures*, and their venerable sanctuary the scene of unseemly political excitement."

Molé, Dazincour, Dugazon, and Fleury, who was not then in his fortieth year, were the fathers of the stage, and while France was dashing to pieces the diadem of her kings, the crown of Baron, Quinault and Le Kain appeared to have no heir, no one dreaming for a moment that its rightful claimant was in their midst, or that his name was Talma.

"We had no idea," wrote Fleury, "of the sublime power which existed in his expressive face and eloquent action."

Talma was the son of a well-known French dentist, born, according to the *Biographie des Contemporains*, at Paris in 1766. While a mere child his latent genius for the stage was more than once accidentally revealed. On one occasion, in his tenth year, while speaking some passionately tragic lines during a theatrical school performance, he burst into tears and was quite overcome

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by the emotion they inspired. While very young, he came to England with his father, who was appointed surgeon-dentist to George III. Here he acquired a knowledge of English and spoke it so well that some noblemen who witnessed his acting in certain private theatrical performances strongly urged his father to bring him up for the London stage. It was, indeed, with this end in view that his education was conducted. But destiny ruled otherwise. The elder Talma was compelled, by urgent circumstances, to return to France, and, on the 27th of November, 1787, his talented son made his first public appearance at the Théâtre Français, playing "Seide" in Voltaire's *Mahomet*. He was successful, although his acting was somewhat wanting, it was said, in smoothness and concentration, but no one seemed to recognize his exceptional greatness. To again quote Fleury, "He, above whose cradle the Muse of Tragedy had hung, breathing into his infant soul her sublime inspiration, Talma, was amongst them, and they knew it not." Only one, gifted with more penetration than his fellows, the popular actor Dugazon, perceived the germs of his latent genius.

Political strife had divided the players of the Théâtre Français into opposing camps. On the one side were Talma, the famous Dugazon (whose extraordinary love-story is worth re-telling) and the not less famous tragic actress Madame Vestris; on the other side Fleury, Dazincour, Contat and Raucour. The majority fluctuated from one side to the other and were true to neither. But Talma never swerved; he was far too fervently earnest and sincere for that.

It was, probably, about this time that he made the acquaintance of a young military student, by birth a Corsican, and by name Napoleon Bonaparte, a poor young man who was very glad to receive from him gratuitous admissions to the theatre. Both the young actor and the young soldier were enthusiastic disciples of liberty, both were daringly ambitious, both were undemonstrative and reserved. It was said of young Talma that his disposition had never recovered from the dreariness and coldness of the foggy English climate in which he had passed his boyhood. It was said of young Napoleon that the gloom of discontent and the envy of pride kept him cold, silent and haughty. Yet between Talma and Napoleon the friendship of their youth never moulted a feather, and the intercourse which began in obscurity and poverty continued to the last always fervent and faithful. The hours that were not devoted to their respective professions were often passed together. "They used frequently," says one who knew Talma personally, "to stroll together through the streets of Paris in the evening. Bonaparte was so immoderately fond of coffee that he could not refrain from entering every tavern by which they passed, and in which his favourite beverage could be procured. His love for it arose from its exciting qualities. After he had swallowed large draughts, and when his spirits were awakened into unusual vivacity, he

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indulged in all sorts of ambitious speculations." His friend Talma often could not refrain from smiling at the confidence with which he predicted his future greatness, "for he was ever commercing with futurity, and by anticipation was already a great man. All his notions were vast and daring, and he expressed himself in wild and dreamy imagery, which was well suited to his high and aspiring thoughts."

Talma said that "at this time his (Napoleon's) conversation was nearly Ossianic," and confesses that he was half-offended when an Englishman whose words we quote expressed his incredulity with reference to the supposed antiquity of Ossian's poems, of which Talma's imperial friend and master always carried a small edition.

Talma when, in after years, he spoke of his friend Napoleon, who had loaded him with favours, and for whom he entertained the most sincere feelings of love and esteem, was always deeply affected.

It is probable that in their early years the bond which first united them was that of their mutual ambition and discontent. Each felt within himself powers which the world had yet to recognize; each was possessed with a passionate yearning for greatness and fame; each was confident of winning the glorious prize depicted by his imagination; each was waiting and watching for the turn of fortune's tide to take it at the flood.

It may well have been due to this friendship in youth and maturity that when the Emperor Napoleon discouraged every other branch of literature and art, acting and the drama always found in him a protector and a patron.

The chance for which both these aspiring youngsters were watching came first to Talma, with Chénier's *Charles IX., ou l'Ecole des Rois.*

Speaking of this tragedy, Fleury says "How great the change since I was at Ferney, playing with Voltaire's wig." Voltaire had then said to him, "The time is to be when popes shall be personated on the stage and held up to the world's hatred as were the Artreuses and Thyestesses of the Greeks; and ere a century has elapsed, dramatists will be bold enough to take even the Massacre of St. Bartholomew for their subject in a tragedy."

And there, in 1789, only eleven years after that prophecy had been uttered, it was realised. In *Charles IX.*, if not a pope, a cardinal was brought upon the stage, and the Massacre of St. Bartholomew was represented!

Chénier, annoyed by the refusal of the actor, Saint Fals, to play the initial part in his new tragedy—because, say some, he thought it unworthy his talent and position; because, say others, he felt his great powers were unequal to the demands it made—offered it to Talma, Fleury says, at Saint Fals' special request.

Fleury writes: "We had already witnessed the power of our

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young comrade displayed in the part of "Seide," and, despite the inequalities of that performance and his defects of style, he showed the greatest command over the various expressions of tragic feeling." Therefore, he and his histrionic brethren approved unanimously of the author's choice, although they well knew the importance of a leading part in that which was called "the *va-tout* of the season."

The company were, however, by no means so well agreed about the play itself. Vehement discussions arose amongst them, each supporting or opposing, upholding or denouncing, according to the political opinions held. Still it was played.

Neither author nor actors anticipated the mighty triumph young Talma was about to gain, although both believed that there were chances in the part of which an actor of genius would avail himself with the greatest effect. The grandeur of Talma's conception filled them with astonishment and admiration. It was as wonderful as it was original. The intensity and apparent reality of his feelings, and the power with which he expressed them, were startlingly true to nature. Without for a second losing artistic finish or poetic grandeur, the old pomposity, and stilted artificial style of French tragedy were completely thrown aside. He electrified his audience and laid the foundation of an entirely new school of acting at a blow. He was, what Le Kain had been called, the Garrick of France, and that single performance gave him full claim to the distinction. "He had," said a contemporary, judging him by the old actor's standard—"too much transport in his performance, but he had also fire, intellectual greatness and nobleness."

Most accounts of the Théâtre Français attribute to the immediate suppression of this play, and a consequent quarrel between the two great political parties in the theatre, to a mean feeling of professional jealousy. It resulted in a split between the political partisans of the green-room, and the setting up, by Talma's party, of a rival theatre in the ex-Rue de la Roi, then Rue de Richelieu, and afterwards Rue-something else, which theatre was boldly baptised and christened the Théâtre de la République.[1] To go back:—

The true reason for the withdrawal of *Charles IX.* appears to have been an order to suppress it, sent by the King's Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, on the ground that the bishops believed it to be antagonistic to religion and the priesthood, and calculated to beget evil and unjust prejudice. In other words, *Ecole des*

[1] It was established in the Ancienne Salles des Variétés, and became the actual Théâtre Français, that which Talma had quitted, becoming the Théâtre de la Nation, and introducing by way of a fresh and attractive novelty the substitution of oil lamps for wax candles, and for the old programmes, which contained only the names of the plays, the modern play-bill containing also the names of the players and the characters personated.

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Rois owed its sudden cessation to the command of Louis XVI. "It would," Fleury very reasonably says, "have been most ill-advised on our part to have interrupted the progress of a piece which drew prodigiously crowded houses. *Charles IX.* brought us as rich a harvest as the *Marriage of Figaro*, which has often been described in French histrionic records as one of the leading causes of that democratic action which led to Revolution; and there can be no doubt that in it Beaumarchais, artist, politician, dramatist, merchant and projector, added nothing healing to the terrible political wounds which throbbed and burned in the body of the people, spreading cancer-like throughout the entire social system.[1]

Mirabeau was at that time a constant visitor to the actor's green-room, and the fiery French orator of the Revolution visited the Théâtre Français in formal state to request, in the people's name, the restoration of *Charles IX.* to the boards, for the entertainment of the Provençal deputies on the occasion of the Fête of the Federation.

It was reasonably urged in reply, that the piece was one calculated to beget violent passions and unlawful outrages, whereas the ceremony of the Champ de Mars should be one of brotherly harmony and love. Mirabeau's request was firmly refused, and he retired full of indignant anger.

So the deputies themselves requested the performance of the unlucky play, with the same result, save that a handsomely printed copy of it was respectfully presented to them by the actors, with some complimentary sentiments.

Then the people themselves took the matter in hand, and, majestically, began to riot.

On the 21st of that memorable July, the curtain went up discovering Naudet, Talma and Mademoiselle Lange on the stage, in the first scene of *Epiménide*. Loud cries for *Charles IX.* arose, in the midst of which a patriotic speech prepared for the occasion was formally delivered by one of the deputies. The audience broke forth into yet fiercer cries at its conclusion, refused to listen to explanations, and were proceeding from bad to worse, when Talma, who had stood calmly by, demanded a hearing. He assured them that in consequence of the illness of Madame Vestris and Saint Prix, it was impossible to act *Charles IX.* on that occasion as it should be acted, but that the play they desired would be performed on the 24th instant. Then the storm ceased, and on the date mentioned the obnoxious play was most reluctantly reproduced and witnessed with frequent outbursts of tumultuous approval, Talma being called for at its end to receive three distinct rounds of applause.

One of the incidents of that performance is worth recalling, as

[1] The receipts of the house on the first night were 5,678 liv. 19 sous.

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eloquently expressive of the spirit of that time and not altogether inapplicable to our own. The gentlemen in the pit had always removed their hats ; it was one of the laws of ordinary politeness at the Théâtre Français, that they should do so. Some haughty democratic playgoers, on this occasion characteristically and proudly enforcing the right of the individual as opposed to that of the community, obstinately refused to uncover. Where was the liberty of the subject if one neighbour had not the right to annoy another in whatever way he pleased ? Let each man study only his own convenience—that is freedom, said the commune. Out of this arose a great uproar.

The actor who personated "M. le Cardinal," was on the stage and speaking, when one of the spectators interrupted him, crying—

"Stop a moment, M. le Cardinal. Wait till we make that fellow take off his hat."

"That fellow" was a broad-faced savage-looking person, who replied mockingly.

"Do you flatter yourself that you can force *me* to take off *my* hat ? "

"Certainly," replied the first who spoke.

"That fellow" started to his feet, and as he rose his tall athletic figure seemed to assume gigantic proportions, and in the midst of threatening outcries he struck down his head-covering more firmly over his brows and shouted defiantly, as he shook his fist in their angry faces.

"Firm as the Hat of Servandoni!" referring to one of the capped towers of Saint-Sulpice, which was then so called after the name of its architect.

He was removed by force and his name was one afterwards famous and terrible enough; it was Danton.

A newspaper war followed this performance, in which Mirabeau and Talma were associated as the champions of the people's rights, and their opponents in the theatres were denounced as the foes of Liberty. In this wordy battle Chénier played a prominent part. One result was the dismissal of Talma from the Théâtre Français, and the demand that he should be reinstated, made by the Mayor of Paris, and this demand being disregarded, by the rising of the populace in Talma's favour. His rivals were cried down as aristocrats by roaring mobs, and when the theatre opened, riots began, threatening the destruction of the building. Women shrieked, men shouted and howled, an attack was made upon the stage, and Fleury narrowly escaped being killed by a huge piece of wood torn down and hurled at him. The military arrived just in time to save the place from ruin. The entire company of the Théâtre Français were taken up and brought before a magistrate, who told them the dynasties of Duras and Richelieu were no more, that the king's chamberlains were powerless, and that Talma must be restored to his old position. The actors were compelled to yield;

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Charles IX. was announced for repetition, and Talma was reinstated in his favourite part. All through the strife Dugazon supported Talma.

Fleury remarks, "Talma's errors were those of an ambitious but weak man eager to make his way in the world. His enthusiastic faith in the Revolution was that of the artist not the politician. He believed in the possibility of restoring the Forum and its Ciceros, as he might well believe that, in himself, Roscius had come again. He thought that his country was really inspired by a spirit of antiquity, that red-heeled shoes, gold-laced coats and ruffles were actually changing into Roman togas and Greek mantles. In politics, as on the stage, he cast loose the dishevelled hair of Orestes and sprang with impassioned grandeur into yet untrodden paths."

Both Talma and Dugazon were men whose feelings were too readily moved to make progress in a solid, orderly, secure way; they took imagination, not reason, for their guide.

When, as already said, the upshot of these turbulent movements was the opening of a second theatre in Paris, Talma left behind him, at the old house, a woman whom he dearly loved, Madame Petit, a charming young widow and talented actress, daughter of the popular actor Vanhoe. She and her lover went through many strange trials and vicissitudes before their happiness received the crown of matrimony.

In September, 1793, the Théâtre de la Nation was suddenly closed by order of the Committee of Public Safety. The actors and actresses were all taken from their homes in the night and conveyed to prison, the ladies to Sainte Pelagie and the Anglaises, the gentlemen to an old prison devoted to convicted felons, the prison of the Magdelonnettes, the most unhealthy in Paris. Many of them were condemned to death, untried, their chief crime being that of dwelling with disrespectful emphasis upon the names *citoyene* and *cotoyenne*, when substituted by order of the authorities for the old titles Monsieur and Madame, whenever such words occurred in their parts.

The strange and romantic story of their escape from death and return, worn and lank, weak and pale, to the stage is apart from the subject of this paper.

Madame Petit was restored to liberty on condition that she should join Talma at the Théâtre de la République, where, alas! for Talma's happiness, Robespierre fell in love with her, and ascribing the rejection of his suit to her love for Talma, put the great republican actor's name on his list of *condamnés*.

Luckily a tailor who was employed by both Robespierre and Talma, overheard the former's plan for getting rid of the latter. It was not an original plan; thousands had shared Talma's threatened fate for Talma's crime in the days of kings, as did poor Favart, the actor, dramatic poet, and pastrycook, when the great

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Marshal Saxe wanted his wife, and acted as his monarch Louis XV. did when he wanted to bring up a gentleman's pretty little child to a life of gilded shame and infamy—he imprisoned her father. For bad men are bad men, whether royalist or republican, kings or marshals. However, such as Robespierre's plan was, the tailor told it to Talma, who told it to Madame Petit. She fled from Paris; and when, in 1794, the downfall of Robespierre enabled her to do so with safety, the beautiful actress returned to her lover and the stage.

But Talma was then married. Under the new republican system the ties of matrimony were however so lightly regarded, that this obstacle was one of comparatively small importance. Talma immediately obtained a divorce from his first wife, who seems to have been a very unsatisfactory partner, and married Madame Petit.

But neither of the two theatres appeared to flourish. Tragedies on the stage were poor feeble horrors compared with the commonplace every-day tragedies of real revolutionary life; the public were sick of them, and craved lighter and less affecting entertainments. In dramatic literature, Demoustier became the chief favourite, and nothing went down with the play-going public but laughter-creating trifles of an anti-realistic character, in which so languid an interest was awakened by the actors, that the fashionable mode of applauding them was by joining the thumb and little finger of the right hand and tapping them gently on the thumb and fourth finger of the left. Yet two other theatres sprang up.

"Bankruptcy and fire," says Fleury, completed what proscription and imprisonment commenced. The companies broke up, and the scattered actors determined to go back to the old plan by forming themselves into one united company. This plan, after some opposition and controversy, was adopted. "Ah!" exclaimed one of their leaders, "what a gratifying picture this union presented! What a delightful mingling of hope and genius! How many conflicting interests and opinions gave way before the nobly unselfish love of art? It was truly a blending of extremes. Rome and Geneva hand-in-hand!"

Talma and Michot spoke on the occasion of the first meeting with passionate earnestness, and were greeted with loud prolonged cheers. "Talma," says Fleury, "was delighted. His fine features were lighted up with an expression of pleasure, which gave them a new charm, and for my part, I was in a transport of joy. I flew to the bust of Molière, exclaiming, 'Here is our father and patron, let us vow eternal allegiance to him and love to each other.'"

Then he devoutly embraced the bust, and all present did the same. It was very sentimental, touching, and French.

The united players opened their campaign against evil fortune and disunion with the *Cid* and *l'Ecole des Maris*.

With varying success the theatre continued open until General

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Buonaparte became the Emperor Napoleon. Some of the actors went with the conqueror to Egypt, and suffered all the inconveniences and hardships of war in a cruelly inhospitable land, to keep up the soldiers' spirits with dramatic performances after the plan carried out by Marshal Saxe. Some of them went with him to Moscow, and endured the miseries and dangers of that ghastly retreat; and many, including Talma, were with him at Dresden, where they performed to an audience composed exclusively of sovereigns and royal princes, and were as proud to do it as if there were not, and never had been, in all the wide world, such things as their recently abandoned republican principles. Such is France. Napoleon was always the last to appear in the theatre on these occasions. It looked as if all these great monarchs and mighty princes and princesses were waiting for him before they dared to begin to enjoy themselves. Quite theatrical and tricky, thoroughly Napoleonic.

In the days of the Empire, Talma's glory grew in brilliancy, and his fame became European. He never relaxed in his efforts, never ceased to aspire to yet greater heights, and in Napoleon he ever found the friend, critic, patron, and adviser. The great conqueror and the great actor often sat alone together as familiar and unceremonious as in the old days when they were lads together, chatting over their little china cups in a third-rate café. The emperor would have animated discussions with him concerning his conceptions and their realisation. Excessive action he constantly denounced, and he detested over-loudness of voice.

"I cannot admire sufficiently," he said once, "the naturalness and simplicity of your acting. Always remember that men of real dignity, whether derived from birth or talents, are men who have complete control over their passions and feelings. They are, of course, agitated by circumstances, and excited by the presence of powerful ideas, and then they may raise their voices and use language which is not that of ordinary every-day life; but, as a rule, they will speak as you and I speak, conversationally." On another occasion, while dwelling on the same subject, the Emperor said, according to M. Tissot:

"Talma, you often call upon me in the morning. Note what you see. Princesses who have been deprived of their lovers, kings who have lost their crowns, the representatives of ancient dynasties deposed by war, great generals soliciting rewards; you may trace here the development of ambition, envy, jealousy, the workings of hate, and love, and grief, sudden outbursts of afflictions and sorrows, which are hidden deep down in the heart. All these things make tragedy. My palace is full of tragedy, and I am myself the most tragic hero of our age. Well! Do we throw our arms aloft when we express emotion; do we start, grimace or shout, or affect grand airs? Here is your school; study our gestures, our attitudes, the tones of our voices. As we speak, so

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all speak in whom interest or passion reigns. Here are the examples for your study; do not neglect them."

In the *Souvenirs Historiques sur la Vie et la Mort de F. Talma* we read, "If Napoleon frequently resorted to lofty declamation and theatrical trickery in his political life he was by no means a supporter of them on the stage." When Talma played "Nero" in Britannicus, he said, "I should like less action; people of that kind are more concentrated within themselves, and also a more distinct marking of the man's inner contest between the principles established by a good education and his evil nature." When the actor was personating "Cæsar" in *The Death of Pompey*, Napoleon said:

"In pronouncing his tirade against kings, where he says, '*pour moi, qui tiens le trône égal à l'infamie*,' Cæsar is evidently not sincere, for the throne is already an object of desire to him, and his words are intended for the Romans behind him, whom it is his interest to persuade that he shrinks with repugnance from a monarchy. The actor ought to let this be seen, and not speak as if Cæsar believed his own words."

In the early part of July, 1806, when the tragedy of *Esther* was performed before the Emperor at court, Talma breakfasted with him on the following morning, and M. de Champagny, then Minister of the Interior, was present.

"That Ahasuerus was a wretched king," said Napoleon to Talma, and then turning to his minister, without waiting for a reply, he suddenly asked, "What is the present state of the Jews? Send me a report on the subject."

The report was made, and a fortnight after the Government convoked the first assembly of the Notables among the Jews, the object of which was to give the Jews legal rights in France and shape their destiny. More than once it was suspected that Napoleon, like Marshal Saxe, had the idea of gathering together the remnants of that scattered nation and restoring them to their ancient home.

My subject has run away with me, and lest I should exceed the bounds of an ordinary magazine article, I hasten to a conclusion, although my notes and extracts are still largely unused.

In 1817 Talma was in England, giving a series of performances at the opera concert rooms, scenes in which he played his most popular parts, assisted by Mademoiselle Georges. On that occasion he said to a friend:

"Your English audience and I, we don't understand one another; the *conventions* of our stage are so different from yours. I don't know what they expect of me, and they don't understand what I do, therefore there is no enthusiasm, and that *must be* for the actor to excell: if he inspires his audience he catches back their enthusiasm; if they are cold he will be cold." He added, "Besides, I give them only my best scenes, and that is

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disadvantageous to me," meaning, as he afterwards explained, a want of proper contrast between violent action and repose in the passionate scenes, and the absence of that preliminary concentration of which such outbursts are the natural results, and without which they must appear abrupt and strikingly unnatural. In further illustration he pointed out how the parts of Milton's *Paradise Lost* belonged so perfectly to the entire poem that, separated from it, they became unreadable. "There are," said he, "the places where the reader's mind and feeling find repose, and if you read the glorious poem without them, even it, in its turn, becomes unreadable."

Talma's "Hamlet," a very free French translation from Shakespear's tragedy, is thus described by an English eye-witness who saw it in Paris.

"His first entrance—his rush upon the stage, imagining he is pursued by his father's ghost—was really terrific? The wild cry, the staggering uncertain step, the distended eyes, the open mouth, the wide-spread fingers, and hands vaguely waving in the air! It was altogether a representation of terror, mingled with horror, unequalled for force and truth. It needed the presence of no ghost to account for it; it was manifest that nothing short of a supernatural vision could have occasioned it. He almost realized the effects enumerated by Shakespeare's ghost, as consequent upon his narrating the tale he *could* unfold to ears of flesh and blood. Little, if at all, inferior to this was his gradual recovery from his alarm on discovering himself to be in the presence of Norceste." In this play the ghost does not appear, but whenever he is supposed to appear, you saw him in the actor's face.

"The effect produced by Talma's *je le vois*, when he sees something invisible to all but himself, was awful."

"On a line with his awful imaginings of the presence of the ghost," says the same writer, "might be placed his threats to Claudius. They were overwhelming, like thunder, or a whirlwind, and the actor (Desmousseaux) to whom they were addressed, forgetting, in their fearful reality, the play, the stage, the audience, seemed absolutely to quail beneath them. I have seen him produce a similar effect in 'Nero.'"

Again, speaking of Hamlet's soliloquy, this contemporary says he never heard it so well delivered, and another describing it says:

"He delivered it in a manner perfectly original, one which with some appearance of strangeness, was powerful and impressive in the highest degree. It would not have produced a great effect upon the mass of auditors in one of our own theatres, but a discriminating actor would have found in it much food for study, and even much worth imitating. The pauses were long, but the utterance was sudden and occasionally precipitate. There was an earnestness, and, if I may say so, an impatient curiosity

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in his investigations of the mysteries of the grave, which he seemed to open and search, like one looking for treasured secrets in its dark impenetrable depth. Yet there was no loss of dignity in this impassionate scrutiny. He was swift, not hurried. His images appeared to pass over his elevated mind like the shadows of fleeting clouds. . . . It was a noble portraiture of a man holding discourse with death."

Talma spoke in terms of the highest and most unaffected praise of John Kemble's acting. His "Coriolanus" he considered a masterpiece, uniting with the highest genius the most consummate art. He acknowledged the genius of Edmund Kean, but thought him extravagant and mannered. For Miss O'Neil he had profound admiration. In the expression of domestic pathos he said she was without an equal. He used to tell how she moved some French ladies, whom he took to see her, to tears, although they had gone with him firmly believing that English acting was rude and barbarous, and although they did not understand a word of English. Amongst German actors he had seen but one whom he admired, Iffland, whom he regarded as an actor of extraordinary ability.

Talma was the first to carry out successfully the reform in stage costumes which was commenced by Le Kain, and some amusing stories are extant connected with his early efforts in that direction—especially that of his appearing bare legged and bare footed—but for these I have not space.

He died at Paris on the 9th of October, 1826. To the last he was in the full possession of his faculties. When he heard that the Archbishop of Paris was calling daily, despite his refusal to see him, he said, referring to the fact that no player was allowed Christian burial unless he had abjured his profession:

"I am much obliged to him for his kindness, and should I recover, I will thank him; if I grow worse, pray keep all priests from my bedside. What do they want? Can they expect me to abjure a profession to which I owe all my fame, an art which I idolize, and retract forty of the proudest years of my life; separate my cause from that of my comrades, and thus pronounce them infamous? Never—Never!"

A few moments before he died he whispered slowly, "Voltaire, Voltaire—like Voltaire."

One of his last wishes expressed to his nephew was that his body should be dissected. "The doctors," said he, "know nothing of my disease, and my body may enable them to be of greater use to my fellow-creatures. Let them have it."

A Paris correspondent said, on the 19th of the month in which he died, "Talma's body is not to be taken to the church, nor any religious ceremony be performed. Such was the express wish of the deceased. . . . He was a Protestant, but no rigid observer of any external forms of worship. He maintained that to be a

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moral honest man was quite sufficient to ensure the approbation of his Creator."

He was always proud to say that he never ridiculed any man's religion, however absurd it might appear to him, or be in reality.

His funeral procession was a grand one, which all Paris thronged to witness. More than a thousand private carriages followed the eighteen mourning coaches, and he was buried in Père la Chaise, where you may still see his tomb.

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THE FIELD-PLAY.

I. UPTILL-A-THORN.

SHE pinned her torn dress with a thorn torn from the bushes through which she had scrambled to the hay-field. The gap from the lane was narrow, made more narrow by the rapid growth of summer; her rake caught in an ash-spray, and in releasing it she "ranted" the bosom of her print dress. So soon as she had got through she dropped her rake on the hay, searched for a long, nail-like thorn, and thrust it through, for the good-looking, careless hussy never had any provision of pins about her. Then, taking a June rose which pricked her finger, she put the flower by the "rant," or tear, and went to join the rest of the hay-makers. The blood welled up out of the scratch in the finger more freely than would have been supposed from so small a place. She put her lips to it to suck it away, as folk do in all quarters of the earth yet discovered, being one of those instinctive things which come without teaching. A red dot of blood stained her soft white cheek, for, in brushing back her hair with her hand, she forgot the wounded finger. With red blood on her face, a thorn and a rose in her bosom, and a hurt on her hand, she reached the chorus of rakers.

The farmer and the sun are the leading actors, and the hay-makers are the chorus, who bear the burden of the play. Marching, each a step behind the other, and yet in a row, they presented a slanting front, and so crossed the field, turning the "wallows." At the hedge she took her place, the last in the row. There were five men and eight women; all flouted her. The men teased her for being late again at work; she said it was so far to come. The women jeered at her for tearing her dress—she couldn't get through a "thornin'" hedge right. There was only one thing she could do, and that was to make "a vool of zum veller" (make a fool of some fellow). Dolly did not take much notice, except that her nervous temperament showed slight excitement in the manner she used her rake, now turning the hay quickly, now missing altogether, then catching the teeth of the rake in the buttercup-runners. The women did not fail to tell her how awkward she was. By-and-by Dolly bounced forward, and, with a flush on her cheek, took the place next to the men. They teased her too, you see, but there was no spiteful malice in their tongues.

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There are some natures which, naturally meek, if much condemned, defy that condemnation, and willingly give it ground of justification by open guilt. The women accused her of too free a carriage with the men; she replied by seeking their company in the broad glare of the summer day. They laughed loudly, joked, but welcomed her; they chatted with her gaily; they compelled her to sip from their ale as they paused by the hedge. By noon there was a high colour on her cheeks; the sun, the exercise, the badinage had brought it up.

So fair a complexion could not brown even in summer, exposed to the utmost heat. The beams indeed did heighten the hue of her cheeks a little, but it did not shade to brown. Her chin and neck were wholly untanned, white and soft, and the blue veins roamed at their will. Lips red, a little full perhaps; teeth slightly prominent but white and gleamy as she smiled. Dark brown hair in no great abundance, always slipping out of its confinement and straggling, now on her forehead, and now on her shoulders, like wandering bines of bryony. The softest of brown eyes under long eyelashes; eyes that seemed to see everything in its gentlest aspect, that could see no harm anywhere. A ready smile on the face, and a smile in the form. Her shape yielded so easily at each movement that it seemed to smile as she walked. Her nose was the least pleasing feature—not delicate enough to fit with the complexion, and distinctly upturned, though not offensively. But it was not noticed; no one saw anything beyond the laughing lips, the laughing shape, the eyes that melted so near to tears. The torn dress, the straggling hair, the tattered shoes, the unmended stocking, the straw hat split, the mingled poverty and carelessness—perhaps rather dreaminess—disappeared when once you had met the full, untroubled gaze of those beautiful eyes. Untroubled, that is, with any ulterior thought of evil or cunning; they were as open as the day, the day which you can make your own for evil or good. So, too, like the day, was she ready to the making.

No stability; now fast in motion; now slow; now by fits and starts; washing her face to-day, her hands to-morrow. Never going straight even along the road; talking with the waggoner, helping a child to pick watercress, patting the shepherd's dog, finding a flower, and late every morning at the hay-field. It was so far to come, she said; no doubt it was, if these stoppings and doublings were counted in. No character whatever, no more than the wind; she was like a well-hung gate swinging to a touch; like water yielding to let a reed sway; like a singing-flame rising and falling to a word, and even to an altered tone of voice. A word pushed her this way; a word pushed her that. Always yielding, sweet, and gentle. Is not this the most seductive of all characters in woman?

Had they left her alone, would it have been any different?

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Those bitter, coarse, feminine tongues which gave her the name of evil, and so led her to openly announce that, as she had the name, she would carry on the game. That is an old country saying, "Bear the name, carry the game." If you have the name of a poacher, then poach; you will be no worse off, and you will have the pleasure of the poaching. It is a serious matter, indeed, to give any one a bad name, more especially a sensitive, nervous, beautiful girl.

Under the shady oaks at luncheon the men all petted her and flattered her in their rude way, which, rude as it was, had the advantage of admitting of no mistake. Two or three more men strolled up from other fields, luncheon in hand and eating as they came, merely to chat with her. One was a mower—a powerful fellow, big boned, big everywhere, and heavy fisted; his chest had been open since four o'clock that morning to the sun, and was tanned like his face. He took her in his mighty arms and kissed her before them all; not one dared move, for the weight of that bone-smashing fist was known. Big Mat drank, as all strong men do; he fought; beyond that there was nothing against him. He worked hard, and farmers are only too glad of a man who will work. He was rather a favourite with the master, and trusted. He kissed her twice, and then went back to his work of mowing, which needs more strength than any other country labour—a mower is to a man what a dray-horse is to a horse.

They lingered long over the luncheon under the shady oaks, with the great blue tile of the sky overhead, and the sweet scent of hay around them. They lingered so long, that young Mr. Andrew came to start them again, and found Dolly's cheeks a-glow. The heat and the laughter had warmed them; her cheeks burned, in contrast to her white, pure forehead—for her hat was off—and to the cool shade of the trees. She lingered yet a little longer chatting with Mr. Andrew—lingered a full half-hour—and when they parted—she had given him a rose from the hedge. Young Mr. Andrew was but half a farmer's son; he was destined for a merchant's office in town; he had been educated for it, and was only awaiting the promised opening. He was young, but no yokel; too knowing of town cunning and selfish hardness to entangle himself. Yet those soft brown eyes, that laughing shape; Andrew was very young and so was she, and the summer sun burned warm.

The blackbirds whistled the day away, and the swallows sought their nests under the eaves. The curved moon hung on the sky as the hunter's horn on the wall. Timid Wat—the hare—came ambling along the lane, and almost ran against two lovers in a recess of the bushes by an elm. Andrew, Andrew! these lips are too sweet for you; get you to your desk—that smiling shape, those shaded, soft brown eyes, let them alone. Be generous—do not awaken hopes you can never, never fulfil. The new-mown hay is

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scented, yet more sweetly in the evening—of a summer's eve it is always too soon to go home.

The blackbirds whistled again, big Mat slew the grass from the rising to the going down of the sun—moon-daisies, sorrel, and buttercups lay in rows of swathe as he mowed. I wonder whether the man ever thought, as he reposed at noontide on a couch of grass under the hedge? Did he think that those immense muscles, that broad, rough-hewn plank of a chest of his, those vast bones encased in sinewy limbs—being flesh in its fulness—ought to have more of this earth than mere common men, and still more than thin-faced people—mere people, not men—in black coats? Did he dimly claim the rights of strength in his mind, and arrogate to himself the prerogatives of arbitrary kings? Who knows what big processes of reasoning, dim and big, passed through his mind in the summer days? Did he conclude he had a right to take what others only asked or worked for?

The sweet scent of the new mown hay disappeared, the hay became whiter, the ricks rose higher, and were topped and finished. Hourly the year grew drier and sultry, as the time of wheat-harvest approached. Sap of spring had dried away; dry stalk of high summer remained, browned with heat. Mr. Andrew (in the country the son is always called by his Christian name, with the prefix, Master or Mr.) had been sent for to London to fill the promised lucrative berth. The reapers were in the corn—Dolly tying up; big Mat slashing at the yellow stalks. Why the man worked so hard no one could imagine, unless it was for pure physical pleasure of using those great muscles. Unless, indeed, a fire, as it were, was burning in his mind, and drove him to labour to smother it, as they smother fires by beating them. Dolly was happier than ever—the gayest of the gay. She sang, she laughed, her white, gleaming teeth shone in the sunshine; it was as if she had some secret which enabled her to defy the taunts and cruel, shameless words hurled at her, like clods of earth, by the other women. Gay she was, as the brilliant poppies who, having the sun as their own, cared for nothing else.

Till suddenly, just before the close of harvest, Dolly and Mat were missing from the field. Of course their absence was slanderously connected, but there was no known ground for it. Big Mat was found intoxicated at the tavern, from which he never moved for a fortnight, spending in one long drain of drink the lump of money his mighty arms had torn from the sun in the burning hours of work. Dolly was ill at home; sometimes in her room, sometimes downstairs; but ill, shaky and weak—ague they called it. There were dark circles round her eyes, her chin drooped to her breast; she wrapped herself in a shawl in all the heat. It was sometime before even the necessity of working brought her forth again, and then her manner was hurried and furtive; she would begin trembling all of a minute, and her eyes filled quickly.

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By degrees the autumn advanced, and the rooks followed the ploughman. Dolly gradually recovered something of her physical buoyancy; her former light-heartedness never returned. Sometimes an incident would cause a flash of the old gaiety, only for her to sink back into subdued quietness. The change was most noticeable in her eyes; soft and tender still, brown and velvety, there was a deep sadness in them—the longer she looked at you, the more it was visible. They seemed as if her spirit had suffered some great wrong; too great for redress, and that could only be borne in silence.

How beautiful are beautiful eyes! Not from one aspect only, as a picture is, where the light falls rightly on it—the painter's point of view—they vary to every and any aspect. The orb rolls to meet the changing circumstance, and is adjusted to all. But a little enquiry into the mechanism of the eyes will indicate how wondrously they are formed. Science has dispelled many illusions, broken many dreams; but here, in the investigation of the eye, it has added to our marvelling interest. The eye is still like the work of a magician: it is physically divine. Besides the liquid flesh which delights the beholder, there is then the retina, the mysterious nerve which receives a thousand pictures on one surface and confuses none; and further, the mystery of the brain, which reproduces them at will, twenty years, yes, three score years and ten, afterwards. Perhaps of all physical things, the eye is most beautiful, most divine.

Her eyes were still beautiful, but subdued and full of a great wrong. What that wrong was became apparent in the course of time. Dolly had to live with Mat and, unhappily, not as his wife. Next harvest there was a child wrapped in a red shawl with her in the field, placed under the shocks while she worked. Her brother Bill talked and threatened—of what avail was it? The law gave no redress, and among men in these things, force is master still. There were none who could meet big Mat in fight.

Something seemed to burn in Mat like fire. Now he worked, and now he drank, but the drink which would have killed another did him no injury. He grew and flourished upon it, more bone, more muscle, more of the savage nature of original man. But there was something within on fire. Was he not satisfied even yet? Did he arrogate yet further prerogatives of kings?—prerogatives which even kings claim no longer. One day, while in drink, his heavy fist descended—he forgot his might; he did not check it, like Ulysses in the battle with Irus—and Dolly fell.

When they lifted her, one eye was gone.

It was utterly put out, organically destroyed; no skill, no money, no living care could restore it. The soft, brown velvet, the laugh, the tear gone for ever. The divine eye was broken—battered as a stone might be. The exquisite structure which reflected the

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trees and flowers, and took to itself the colour of the summer sky, was shapeless.

In the second year, Mr. Andrew came down, and one day met her in the village. He did not know her. The stoop, the dress which clothed, but responded to no curve, the sunken breast, and the sightless eye, how should he recognise these? This ragged, plain, this ugly, repellent creature—he did not know her. She spoke; Mr. Andrew hastily fumbled in his pocket, fetched out half-a-crown, gave it, and passed on quickly. How fortunate that he had not entangled himself!

Meantime, Mat drank and worked harder than ever, and became more morose, so that no one dared cross him, yet as a worker he was trusted by the farmer. Whatever it was, the fire in him burned deeper and to the very quick. The poppies came and went once more, the harvest-moon rose yellow and ruddy, all the joy of the year proceeded, but Dolly was like a violet over which a waggon-wheel had rolled. The thorn had gone deep into her bosom.

II.—Rural Dynamite.

In the cold North men eat bread of fir-bark; in our own fields the mouse, if pressed for food in winter, will gnaw the bark of sapling trees. Frost sharpens the teeth like a file, and hunger is keener than frost. If any one used to more fertile scenes had walked across the barren meads Mr. Roberts rented as the summer declined, he would have said that a living could only be gained from them as the mouse gains it in frost-time. By sharp set nibbling and paring; by the keenest frost-bitten meanness of living; by scraping a little bit here, and saving another trifle yonder, a farmer might possibly get through the year. At the end of each year he would be rather worse off than before, descending a step annually. He must nibble like a frost-driven mouse to merely exist. So poor was the soil, that the clay came to the surface, and in wet weather a slip of the foot exposed it—the heel cut through the veneer of turf into the cold, dead, moist clay. Nothing grew but rushes. Every time a horse moved over the marshy land his hoof left deep holes which never again filled up, but remained the year through, now puddles, full of rain water, and now dry holes. The rain made the ground a swamp; the sun cracked it as it does paint. Who could pay rent for such a place?—for rushes, flags and water.

Yet it was said, with whisper and nod, that the tenant, Mr. Roberts, was a warm man as warm men go after several years of bad seasons, falling prices, and troubles of all kinds. For one thing, he hopped, and it is noted among country folk, that, if a man hops, he generally accumulates money. Mr. Roberts hopped, or rather dragged his legs from rheumatics contracted in thirty

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years hardest of hard labour on that thankless farm. Never did any man labour so continually as he, from the earliest winter dawn when the blackbird, with puffed feathers, still tried to slumber in the thornbush, but could not for cold, on till the latest summer eve, after the white barn owl had passed round the fir copse. Both with his hands, and with his eyes, now working, now watching, the man ceased not, and such was his dogged pertinacity that, like the mouse, he won a living. He did more, he saved. At what price? At the price of a fireless life: I mean without cheer, by denial of everything which renders human life superior to that of the rabbit in his burrow. No wife, no children, no niece, or any woman to see to his comforts; no comfort and no pleasure; a bare house and rheumatism. Bill, his principal labourer, Dolly's brother, slept with him in the same bed, master and man, a custom common in old times, long since generally disused.

Yet Mr. Roberts was not without some humanism, if such a word may be used; certainly he never gave away a penny, but as certainly he cheated no man. He was upright in conduct, and not unpleasant in manner. He could not have been utterly crabbed for this one labourer, Bill, to stay with him five-and-twenty years. This was the six-and-twentieth year they had dwelt there together in the gaunt, grey, lonely house, with woods around them, isolated from the world, and without a hearth. A hearth is no hearth unless a woman sit by it. This six-and-twentieth year, the season then just ended, had been the worst of the series; rain had spoiled the hay, increased the payment of wages by lengthening the time of hay-making; ruin, he declared, stared him in the face; he supposed at last he must leave the tenancy. And now the harvest was done, the ricks thatched with flags from the marsh (to save straw), the partridges were dispersed, the sportsmen having broken up the coveys, the black swifts had departed—they built every year in the grey stone slates on the lonely house—and nothing was left to be done but to tend the cattle morning and evening, to reflect on losses, and to talk ceaselessly of the new terror which hung over the whole district.

It was rick-burning. Probably, gentlemen in London, who, "sit at home at ease," imagine rick-burning a thing of the past, impossible since insurance robbed the incendiary of his sting, unheard of and extinct. Nothing of the kind. That it is not general is true, still to this day it breaks out in places, and rages with vehemence, placing the country side under a reign of terror. The thing seems inexplicable, but it is a fact; the burning of ricks and farm sheds every now and then, in certain localities, reaches the dimensions of a public disaster.

One night from the garret window, Mr. Roberts, and Bill, his man, counted five fires visible at once. One was in full sight, not a mile distant, two behind the wood, above which rose the red

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glow, the other two dimly illumined the horizon on the left like a rising moon. While they watched in the dark garret the rats scampered behind them, and a white barn owl floated silently by. They counted up fourteen fires that had taken place since the beginning of the month, and now there were five together. Mr. Roberts did not sleep that night. Being so near the woods and preserves it was part of the understanding that he should not keep a gun—he took a stout staff, and went out to his hayricks, and there stayed till daylight. By ten o'clock he was trudging into the town; his mind had been half-crazed with anxiety for his ricks, he was not insured, he had never insured, just to save the few shillings it cost, such was the nibbling by which he lived. He had struggled hard and kept the secret to himself—of the non-insurance—he foresaw that if known he should immediately suffer. But at the town the insurance agent demurred to issue a policy. The losses had been so heavy, there was no knowing how much farther the loss might extend, for not the slightest trace of the incendiary had yet been discovered, notwithstanding the reward offered, and this was a new policy. Had it been to add to an old one, had Mr. Roberts insured in previous years, it would have been different. He could not do it on his own responsibility, he must communicate with the head office; most likely they would do it, but he must have their authority. By return of post he should know. Mr. Roberts trudged home again, with the misery of two more nights confronting him; two more nights of exposure to the chance of utter ruin. If those ricks were burned, the savings—the nibblings of his life—were gone. This intense, frost-bitten economy, by which alone he had been able to prosper, now threatened to overwhelm him with destruction.

There is nothing that burns so resolutely as a hay-rick; nothing that catches fire so easily. Children are playing with matches; one holds the ignited match till it scorches the fingers, and then drops it. The expiring flame touches three blades of dry grass, of hay fallen from the rick, these flare immediately; the flame runs along like a train of gunpowder, rushes up the side of the rick, singeing it as a horse's coat is singed, takes the straw of the thatch which blackens into a hole, cuts its way through, the draught lifts it up the slope of the thatch, and in five minutes the rick is on fire irrecoverably. Unless beaten out at the first start, it is certain to go on. A spark from a pipe, dropped from the mouth of a sleeping man, will do it. Once well alight, and the engines may come at full speed, one five miles, one eight, two ten; they may pump the pond dry, and lay hose to the distant brook—it is in vain. The spread of the flames may be arrested, but not all the water that can be thrown will put out the rick. The outside of the rick where the water strikes it turns black, and dense smoke arises, but the inside core continues to burn till the last piece is charred. All that can be done is to hastily cut away that side of the rick—

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if any remains—yet untouched, and carry it bodily away. A hay-rick will burn for hours, one huge mass of concentrated, glowing, solid fire, not much flame, but glowing coals, so that the farmer may fully understand, may watch and study and fully comprehend the extent of his loss. It burns itself from a square to a dome, and the red dome grows gradually smaller till its lowest layer of ashes strews the ground. It burns itself as it were in blocks; the rick was really homogeneous; it looks while aglow as if it had been constructed of large bricks, or blocks of hay. These now blackened blocks dry and crumble one by one till the dome sinks. Under foot the earth is heated, so intense is the fire; no one can approach, even on the windward side, within a pole's length. A widening stream of dense white smoke flows away upwards, flecked with great sparks, blackening the elms, and carrying flakes of burning hay over outhouses, sheds, and farmsteads. Thus from the clouds, as it seems, drops further destruction. Nothing in the line of the wind is safe. Fine impalpable ashes drift and fall like rain half a mile away. Sometimes they remain suspended in the air for hours, and come down presently when the fire is out, like volcanic dust drifting from the crater. This dust lies soft and silky on the hand. By the burning rick, the air rushing to the furnace roars aloud, coming so swiftly as to be cold; on one side intense heat, on the other cold wind. The pump, pump, swing, swing of the manual engines; the quick, short pant of the steam fire-engine; the stream and hiss of the water; shouts and answers; gleaming brass helmets; frightened birds; crowds of white faces, whose frames are in shadow; a red glow on the black, wet mud of the empty pond; rosy light on the walls of the homestead, crossed with vast magnified shadows; windows glistening; men dragging sail-like tarpaulins and rick-cloths to cover the sheds; constables upright and quiet, but watchful, standing at intervals to keep order; if by day, the strangest mixture of sorrowing calm and heated anxiety, the smoke bluish, the floating flakes visible as black specks, the flames tawny, pigeons fluttering round, cows grazing in idol-like indifference to human fears. Ultimately, rows of flattened and roughly circular layers of blackened ashes, whose traces remain for months.

This is dynamite in the hands of the village ruffian.

This hay, or wheat, or barley, not only represents money; it represents the work of an entire year, the sunshine of a whole summer; it is the outcome of man's thought and patient labour, and it is the food of the helpless cattle. Besides the hay, there often go with it buildings, implements, waggons, and occasionally horses are suffocated. Once now and then the farmstead goes.

Now, has not the farmer, even if covered by insurance, reason good to dread this horrible incendiarism? It is a blow at his moral existence as well as at his pecuniary interests. Hardened indeed must be that heart that could look at the old familiar

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scene, blackened, fire-spilt, trodden, and blotted, without an inward desolation. Boxes and barrels of merchandise in warehouses can be replaced, but money does not replace the growth of nature.

Hence the brutality of it—the blow at a man's heart. His hay, his wheat, his cattle, are to a farmer part of his life; coin will not replace them. Nor does the incendiary care if the man himself, his house, home, and all perish at the same time. It is dynamite in despite of insurance. It has occurred to me that perhaps the new system of silos—burying the grass when cut at once in its green state, in artificial caves—may much reduce the risk of fire if it comes into general use.

These fire invasions almost always come in the form of an epidemic, not one but three, five, ten, fifteen fires follow in quick succession. Sometimes they last through an entire winter, though often known to take place in summer, directly after harvest.

Rarely does detection happen; to this day half these incendiary fires are never followed by punishment. Yet it is noted that they generally occur within a certain radius; they are all within six, or seven, or eight miles, being about the distance that a man or two bent on evil could compass in the night time. But it is not always night; numerous fires are started in broad daylight. Stress of winter weather, little food, and clothing, and less fuel at home have been put forward as causes of a chill desperation, ending in crime. On the contrary, these fires frequently occur when labourers' pockets are full, just after they have received their harvest wages. Bread is not at famine prices; hard masters are not specially selected for the gratification of spite; good masters suffer equally. What then is the cause?

There is none but that bitter, bitter feeling which I venture to call the dynamite disposition, and which is found in every part of the civilised world; in Germany, Italy, France, and our own mildly-ruled England. A brooding, morose, concentrated hatred of those who possess any kind of substance or comfort; landlord, farmer, everyone. An unsparing vendetta, a merciless shark-like thirst of destructive vengeance; a monomania of battering, smashing, crushing, such as seizes the Lancashire weaver, who kicks his woman's brains out without any special reason for dislike, mingled with and made more terrible by this unchangeable hostility to property and those who own it. No creed, no high moral hopes of the rights of man and social regeneration, no true *sans culottism* even, nothing at all but set-teeth and inflated nostrils; blow up, burn, smash, annihilate! A disposition or character which is not imaginary but a fact, as proved abundantly by the placing of rails and iron chairs on lines to upset trains, by the dynamite explosions at Government offices, and even at newspaper offices, the sending of letters filled with explosives, firing dynamite in trout streams just to destroy the harmless fish; a character which in the country has hitherto manifested itself in the burn-

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ing of ricks and farm buildings. Science is always putting fresh power into the hands of this class. In cities they have partly awakened to the power of knowledge; in the country they still use the match. If anyone thinks that there is no danger in England because there are no deep-seated causes of discontent, such as foreign rule, oppressive enactments, or conscription, I can assure him that he is wofully mistaken. This class needs no cause at all, prosperity cannot allay its hatred, and adversity does not weaken it. It is certainly unwise to the last degree to provoke this demon, to control which as yet no means have been found. You cannot arrest the invisible; you cannot pour Martini-Henry bullets into a phantom. How are you going to capture people who blow themselves into atoms in order to shatter the frame of a Czar?

In its dealings with the lower class this generation is certainly far from wise. Never was the distinction so sharp between the poor—the sullen poor who stand scornful and desperate at the street corners— and the well-to-do. The contrast now extends to everyone who can afford a black coat. It is not confined to the millionaire. The contrast is with every black coat. Those who only see the drawing-room side of society, those who move, too, in the well-oiled atmosphere of commercial offices, are quite ignorant of the savage animosity which watches them to and fro the office, or the drawing-room from the street corner. Question it is if any mediæval soldiery bursting abroad in Sinigaglia were so brutal as is the street rough, that blot and hideous product of modern civilisation. How easy it is to point to the sobriety and the good sense of the working class and smile in assumed complacency! What have the sober mass of the working class to do with it? No more than you or I, or the Rothschilds, or dukes of blood royal. There the thing is, and it requires no great sagacity to see, that the present mode of dealing with it is a failure and likely to be worse. If you have gunpowder, you should not put it under hydraulic pressure. You should not stir it up and hold matches to it to see if it is there. That is what prosecutions and imprisonments on charges of atheism and so on do. It is stirring up the powder and trying it with a match. Nor should you put it under hydraulic pressure, which is now being done all over the country, under the new laws which force every wretch who enters a workhouse for a night's shelter to stay there two nights; under the cold-blooded cruelty which, in the guise of science, takes the miserable quarter of a pint of ale from the lips of the palsied and decrepit inmates; which puts the imbecile—even the guiltless imbecile—on what is practically bread and water. Words fail me to express the cruelty and inhumanity of this crazed legislation. Sometimes we see a complacent paragraph in the papers, penned by an official doubtless, congratulating the public that the number relieved under the new regulations has

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dropped from say 600 to 150. And what, oh blindest of the blind, do you imagine has become of the remaining 450? Has your precious folly extinguished them? Are they dead? No, indeed. All over the country, hydraulic pressure, in the name of science, progress, temperance, and similar perverted things, is being put on the gunpowder—on the dynamite, if you like—of society. Every now and then some individual member of the Army of Wretches turns and becomes the Devil of modern civilisation. Modern civilisation has put out the spiritual Devil and produced the Demon of Dynamite. Let me raise a voice, in pleading for more humane treatment of the poor—the only way believe me by which society can narrow down and confine the operations of this new Devil. A human being is not a dog, yet is treated worse than a dog. Force these human dogs to learn to read with empty stomachs—stomachs craving for a piece of bread while education is crammed into them. In manhood, if unfortunate, set them to break stones. If imbecility supervene give them bread and water. In helpless age give them the cup of cold water. This is the way to breed dynamite. And then at the other end of the scale let your Thames Embankment Boulevard be the domain of the street rough; let your Islington streets be swept by bands of brutes; let the well dressed be afraid to venture anywhere unless in the glare of gas and electric light! Manufacture it in one district, and give it free scope and play in another. Yet never was there an age in which the mass of society, from the titled to the cottager, was so full of real and true humanity, so ready to start forward to help, so imbued with the highest sentiments. The wrong is done in official circles. No steel-clad baron of Norman days, no ruthless red-stockinged cardinal, with the Bastille in one hand and the tumbril in the other, ever ruled with so total an absence of Heart as the modern "official," the Tyrants of the nineteenth century; whose rods are hobbies in the name of science miscalled, in the name of temperance perverted, in the name of progress backwards, in the name of education without food. It is time that the common-sense of society at large rose in revolution against it. Meantime dynamite.

This is a long digression: suppose while you have been reading it that Mr. Roberts has passed one of the two terrible nights, his faithful Bill at one end of the rickyard and himself at the other. The second night they took up their positions in the same manner as soon as it was dark. There was no moon, and the sky was overcast with those stationary clouds which often precede a great storm, so that the darkness was marked, and after they had parted a step or two they lost sight of each other. Worn with long wakefulness, and hard labour during the day, they both dropped asleep at their posts. Mr. Roberts awoke from the dead vacancy of sleep to the sensation of a flash of light crossing his eyelids, and to catch a glimpse of a man's neck with a red necktie

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illuminated by flame like a Rembrandt head in the centre of shadow. He leaped forward literally yelling—the incendiary he wholly forgot—his rick! his rick! He beat the side of the rick with his stick, and as it had but just caught he beat the flame out. Then he dropped senseless on the ground. Bill, awakened by Roberts' awful yell or shriek of excitement, started to his feet, heard a man rushing by in the darkness, and hurled his heavy stick in that direction. By the thud which followed and a curse, he knew it had hit the object, but not with sufficient force to bring the scoundrel down. The fellow escaped; Bill went to his master and lifted him up; how he got Roberts home he did not know, but it was hours before Roberts could speak. Towards sunrise he recovered, and would go immediately to assure himself that the ricks were safe. Then they found a man's hat—Bill's stick had knocked it off—and by that hat and the red necktie the incendiary was brought to justice. The hat was big Mat's; he always wore a red necktie.

Big Mat made no defence; he was simply stolidly indifferent to the whole proceedings. The only statement he made was that he had not fired four of the ricks, and he did not know who had done so. Example is contagious; some one had followed the dynamite lead, detection never took place, but the fires ceased. Mat, of course, went for the longest period of penal servitude the law allotted.

I should say that he did not himself know why he did it. That intense, brooding moroseness, that wormwood hatred, does not often understand itself. So much the more dangerous is it; no argument, no softening influence can reach it.

Faithful Bill, who had served Mr. Roberts almost all his life, and who probably would have served him till the end, received a money reward from the insurance office for his share in detecting the incendiary. This reward ruined him—killed him. Golden sovereigns in his pocket destroyed him. He went on the drink; he drank, and was enticed to drink, till in six weeks he died in the infirmary of the workhouse.

Mat being in the convict prison, and Dolly near to another confinement, she could not support herself; she was driven to the same workhouse in which her brother had but just died. I am not sure, but believe that pseudo science, the Torturer of these days denied her the least drop of alcohol during her travail. If it did permit one drop, then was the Torturer false to his creed. Dolly survived, but utterly broken, hollow-chested, a workhouse fixture. Still, so long as she could stand she had to wash in the laundry; weak as she was, they weakened her still farther with steam and heat, and labour. Washing is hard work for those who enjoy health and vigour. To a girl, broken in heart and body, it is a slow destroyer. Heat relaxes all the fibres; Dolly's required bracing. Steam will soften wood and enable the artificer to bend it to any

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shape. Dolly's chest became yet more hollow; her cheek bones prominent; she bent to the steam. This was the girl who had lingered in the lane to help the boy pick watercress, to gather a flower, to listen to a thrush, to bask in the sunshine. Open air and green fields were to her life itself. Heart miseries are always better borne in the open air. How just, how truly scientific, to shut her in a steaming wash-house!

The workhouse was situated in a lovely spot, on the lowest slope of hills, hills covered afar with woods. Meads at hand, corn fields farther away, then green slopes over which broad cloud-shadows glided slowly. The larks sang in spring, in summer the wheat was golden, in autumn the distant woods were brown and red and yellow. Had you spent your youth in those fields, had your little drama of life been enacted in them, do you not think that you would like at least to gaze out at them from the windows of your prison? It was observed that the miserable wretches were always looking out of the windows in this direction. The windows on that side were accordingly built up and bricked in that they might not look out.

RICHARD JEFFERIES.

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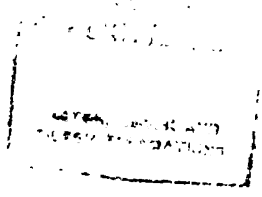

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SIR RALPH OF BEOLEY. See page 762.

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EDWARD ETHERIDGE'S DIFFICULTY.

By MRS. RIDDELL.

Chapter I.

One Sunday night Edward Etheridge walked down the road leading from Cricklewood to London a very happy man.

He had spent a long afternoon at Mr. Bolton's "little box," as that gentleman modestly styled a charming cottage ornée, luxuriously and exquisitely decorated, where he resided, when he was not at "his place" at Jersey, or running about the Continent, or staying with some millionaire in the country, or really so oppressed with work he was obliged to remain in town night and day.

He had bought the little box for "a song" he said, and been "fortunate enough" to "pick up" also presumedly, for "songs," a few "trifles," which his friends were kind enough to consider pretty. As for his gardens, virtually they did not cost him a penny a year. In the way of his business he was compelled to keep horses, and if the grooms had no ground to see after they must of necessity be kicking their heels in the stables or else loafing round the nearest public half their time.

"My head man in Jersey," he was wont to proceed, "is a capital fellow, understands his business thoroughly, and just keeps us bright and gay here with what otherwise must be thrown away. All these sort of things only require management, believe me. It costs as much to live wretchedly as to gather a few comforts around one. For myself, I really do not care where I live, or on what. A chop, hot and well served, is, in my opinion, a dinner fit for an Emperor; and if rents were not so confoundedly high in the City I would as soon—indeed, rather—sleep in Birchin Lane as in Wimpole Street. But the world won't let one indulge in simple tastes, and besides, you know, I have another to consider—my little girl, Rosie. Ah! there she goes to feed her bantams—quite a child still. Bless her."

And so, with these and other modest terms of depreciation, Mr. Samuel Bolton praised himself and exalted his surroundings.

"What I like about Bolton, you know," said one great man to another, "is, he is so sound. There is no flash about him, all genuine—plain, but good. Now, where do you wish to see better horses than his, or a neater turn out; and yet how quiet, how unobtrusive. Everything he has is just the same; there is a genuine

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ring about Bolton that gives one perfect confidence—no bounce—no humbug."

In all of which statements the listener concurred in perfect good faith, quite unconscious that in the length and breadth of the City, from Aldgate to Temple Bar, from Finsbury to Dowgate, no greater humbug lived and moved and had his being than Samuel Bolton—promoter, financier, and leader-of-the-British-public-by-the-nose for more years than it concerns this story to inquire.

A man of Mr. Bolton's profession cultivates many men; but as a rule, there are very few suitors for a daughter's hand upon whom he is likely to look favourably.

Certainly, Edward Etheridge had not been a man upon whom he felt inclined to bestow encouragement.

For various business reasons, it suited his purpose to cultivate the acquaintance of "that person; invite him to dinner, take a cup of coffee, smoke a cigar—that sort of thing, you know;" but when it came to Rosie singing for him—Rosie and he sauntering through the gardens—Rosie taking him with her when she fed those bantams, and Rosie wanting him to escort her when she rode Blue Bell round Edgware and Stanmore, or across Wormwood Scrubbs westward—Mr. Bolton shook his head.

"Rosie shall never marry a poor man, Etheridge," he said, decidedly; "so you had better give it up. No; I have nothing to say against your family, or yourself, or your business, as a business, except that you can't make much money in it. You come of a far better family, I believe, than Rosie does on either side; but good blood is of no use unless it has wealth to back it. When a man speaks to me about his name, all I can answer is, 'What do discounters think of it on a bill?' Of course, I am aware that is not the view taken by county people; but then I am not one of the county people; and, for that matter, neither are you, whatever you may have been once. We need not quarrel about the matter; in fact, I won't quarrel; but you must not think of Rosie and don't oblige me to take her away to Jersey or elsewhere. It could do you no good, and would put me to a monstrous deal of inconvenience. Good-bye! God bless you! Good-bye!" and Mr. Bolton, then *en route* for the Continent, shook Mr. Etheridge's hand, and hurried away, "having only ten minutes," he stated, "in which to give final instructions to his head clerk, and get over to the station."

This was only six months before; and yet, without the conversation being renewed, or the slightest verbal hint given, Mr. Etheridge understood that his prospective father-in-law's views were changed or modified, and that matters were not looking so black as formerly for Rosie and himself.

Pretty, fragile, useless little Rosie! What bliss to have to work for her, strive for her, struggle for her! In a short time he

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would so far have conquered the difficulties that had beset his path that he should be able to ask Mr. Bolton's consent to renewing his suit.

And he felt it would not be refused. No doubt Mr. Bolton, seeing his daughter's happiness was involved, and touched, perhaps, by the self-abnegation and modesty of her lover, had determined to relent, and allow his motherless and only child to marry the man of her choice.

It had been a happy afternoon. They dined early as was Mr. Bolton's Sunday habit when at the cottage. Afterwards, while papa slept, Rosie and their guest wandered round the garden, and then to the bantams—and then, somehow, out into the lanes, and so to Child's Hill, talking not lovers' nonsense, indeed, for they were not permitted lovers yet, but sweet, dreamy, inconsequent talk, like the notes a musician's fingers run idly over before commencing the theme of which his mind is full.

Then after a cup of tea they all went together to church. Mr. Bolton, who said, and truthfully, that "such things were not much in his way," suggested the step, and even accompanying them, and Rosie and Mr. Etheridge looked over the same hymn book, and her voice—she had a pretty voice though not a strong one—sounding in that sacred place strangely sweet in his ears; and there was something about dying in the hymn which for a moment made clergyman, and congregation, and Rosie, all grow dim before his eyes, and caused him to shudder as he thought how empty and bare life would seem if Rosie were to die and be laid in the still and lonely churchyard, outside where they were singing, never to come back again, never to flit a trim, dainty little figure, from house to garden, from garden to poultry yard, any more.

Lover's follies! lover's phantasies—quite true, dear reader—but beautiful even if sometimes sad, to lovers at all events.

Foolish! foolish! foolish! ay, tis the old, old story, always lovely to the actors, always silly to the beholders; and yet, silly though it be, there are a few on-lookers, one here one there, who would willingly relinquish all time has brought if only there could be restored, even for an hour, that which time has taken.

So under the starlight Edward Etheridge walked down the Cricklewood road a happy man.

If great men in the City failed to comprehend Mr. Samuel Bolton's little peculiarities, Edward Etheridge, who was but in a very small way, understood perfectly that unless the financier meant him eventually to marry his daughter he would never have invited him again to the cottage while Rosie was in it.

What the precise reasons might be which influenced him Mr. Etheridge could not decide, but that the invitation had been given accidentally he never imagined. Besides, Mr. Bolton had gone out of his way to make himself agreeable. He had lengthened his sleep in the afternoon by settling to it directly his

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guest declined more claret. He had only referred to the walk beyond the grounds lightly and cheerfully thus:—

"Well, young people, and where do you think you have been to all this time?" Whilst even when they came out of church he made a pretence of saying he saw a person he wished to speak to for lingering behind, only rejoining his daughter and Mr. Etheridge, in fact, when after a very slow saunter homeward, they stood by the gate of the cottage "waiting for papa."

No; even had Mr. Bolton been of as easy a temper as his speech and manner implied, these proceedings could scarcely have been considered the result of mere carelessness.

"He is willing Rosie should marry me," decided Mr. Etheridge. A different man might have said, "He is wishful Rosie should marry me."

Somehow, as they walked together through the lanes, the story of his life had escaped Edward Etheridge. It was not a story—though in it nor disgrace, nor remorse had a place—he cared to dwell upon; but accidentally he told his companion there had been a time when it would scarcely have seemed less strange to him to be assured he would commit some great crime than to know he must earn his own income for himself.

"I was brought up to expect a large property," he explained. "Till I was eighteen I did nothing but amuse myself. From the time I could walk every one treated me as the future owner of Kingsmead. It was not thought necessary even to give me a profession. My uncle, indeed, who then had Kingsmead, warned my mother not to look upon any chances as too certain; but she, poor woman, thought that not even his own son could be more secure to succeed than I. Mr. Etheridge was seventy when he married for the first time. I am thankful to say my mother was dead before she knew the castle she had built for me was all demolished."

"And was that how you lost your property?" asked Rosie, sympathetically.

"I could not very well lose what I never had, and what I think now I never ought have expected; but I did lose my chance of Kingsmead. As your father says, it matters little in these days what a man may have been, for people only consider what he has; and so I rarely speak of those old idle days, I scarcely know why I did so now."

"I am glad you told me," said Rosie, simply. "It must have been very bitter for you. And so that made you come to London."

"Yes; that is how I happened to come to London," he answered.

For a moment he thought of telling her the story of his struggles, his failures, his losses, his work in that mill, where men's best energies are ground like wheat—ground cruelly, merci-

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lessly, remorselessly; but, looking at her childish face, at her clear brow, her fragile swaying figure, he bethought him how idle it would be to attempt to make her understand.

"Could I before I commenced my business day have comprehended the bleakness of the morning, the heat of the noontide, the weariness of the afternoon; could I have believed in the hopes deferred, in the recurring disappointments, the trouble, the toil, the anxiety, the failures which almost neutralised the benefits derived from success, the delays and procrastinations which rendered the chances that offered almost nugatory. Certainly I could not, and why should I perplex her girlish mind by telling her of disappointments and anxieties that now are shadows of the past. After to-morrow I shall find it all plain sailing. I shall have leisure, and hope to work now I have nothing to do save make a nest for my darling where never a storm can reach her."

Dreams, young heart—more foolish, more idle than the love tale softly whispered; and yet, as it is much to be perfectly happy even for an hour, still dream on through the watches of the night, unconscious that already the gale which shall shatter your goodly barque is muttering in the distance—already the cloud gathering which shall beat down the flowers just opening into beauty all level with the earth.

Chapter II.

No matter how happy the Sunday may have been, Black Monday succeeds to it. Nay, is it not true that the happier the first day of the week may seem the more distasteful appears the grinding sordid, work-a-day world which reopens its business doors and takes down its business shutters and begins to make itself otherwise generally intrusive and offensive about nine a.m. on the morning following our national weekly rest.

The holiday is over, and school reopens. School, where the punishments are so frequent, the prizes so few—where it is not always he that works hardest who goes into a higher form—where honesty sees duplicity outstrip it, and the patient industry of years eclipsed by some dexterous piece of chicanery.

For Edward Etheridge, after his happy holiday, Black Monday opened inauspiciously. As he walked Londonwards along the Cricklewood road he had mentally referred to a "difficulty," and the first letter he eagerly opened when he arrived at his office bore reference to it also.

Thus it ran—

"My dear Sir,—I have had much more trouble in finding funds to meet your acceptance now maturing than I anticipated. Now,

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however, I think we may consider the matter settled. I am now just waiting to see the manager of the bank, who will, I doubt not, though it is past hours, arrange matters for me and advise the agents in London— with whom, by-the-way, your account is— that the sum you require has been paid in to your credit here.

"Regretting you should have needed assistance,

"I remain, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

"JOHN OLLEROYD.

"P.S.—I have kept this open to the last moment before post time. The manager has not yet returned, and as the amount is not in cash he must approve before letter of advice is sent to London. I will manage it somehow for you on Monday morning and wire the result.—J. O."

Now this is what happens every day, and every hour, in each working day, to struggling men in London. If they are able to meet their engagements at all it is always at the expense of an amount of time and thought and labour which outsiders might well consider incredible. Great houses can defer giving cheques, can tell creditors their "accounts will be examined," can defer payment upon pretence of some twopenny-halfpenny inaccuracy or forgetfulness of red-tapism, can feel confident bankers won't send back their acceptances even if the balance be thereby put altogether on the wrong side; but for the little traders, the small men, your pity, friends, if likewise your wonder that, while there are lands beyond the sea lacking tillers, lands which would repay all labour spent upon their culture, human beings should toil and moil—week in, week out—for a morsel of bread and dyspepsia, for the sake of the possible fortune which they seek as hopelessly as the man sought the pot of gold at the base of the rainbow arch, and scarcely believe to have been from first to last an illusion luring them on when the power of struggling is over and beggary at hand.

It was a great house which had upset Mr. Etheridge's calculations. The money was owing to him, had been owing for a long time; but the chief clerk, against whose decision there seemed no use in appealing, said, "The firm made it a rule not to pay until they received notice from abroad that the goods had arrived safely."

Asked when the notice might be expected to arrive, raised his eyebrows, and said, "that was quite uncertain, might any day, might not for weeks."

Asked if the firm would accept, say at six months, which would allow ample time for the goods to reach and be realised, shook his head, and said, "The firm never accepted."

Asked if the firm would give a cheque, say for half the amount, smiled contemptuously, and observed that, "The firm never gave a cheque for part of an account. The affair must go through the

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regular course. When the firm heard from its correspondents Mr. Etheridge would at once receive a communication, and if everything were found to be correct, and he called on any pay day after receipt of the firm's letter, he would find his cheque waiting for him."

"And what is your pay day?" asked Mr. Etheridge.

"The last Friday in each month."

"So that if I received a letter from you, say on the last Saturday in the month, I should have to wait four weeks more for my money?"

With a shrug of his shoulders, and a deprecating outward gesture of his hands, the chief clerk said, "Just so;" whereupon Mr. Etheridge—but no, I will not repeat what Mr. Etheridge said.

It was natural, but naughty; and, though a good deal of that sort of thing goes on in the City, as in the country, there exists no special necessity for putting such extremely vigorous Saxon into print.

There is an old saying as to the inadvisability of putting all one's eggs in a single basket.

Almost all Mr. Etheridge's available eggs, in the shape of capital, were locked up at the moment, in one basket, with the firm, and the chief clerk held the key.

As he was determined no one should get at the eggs till that "regular routine upon which the firm based its system" had been gone through, the creditor had to leave without his money.

Most unquestionably the great house was in the wrong, as any judge would soon have demonstrated, and all connected with it; but then pigmies cannot war against giants—the weak against the strong—those who reckon their "turnings over" by hundreds, and those who, in a single stroke of their pen, deal with millions.

The firm would not have waited for any "regular routine" of Mr. Etheridge's, but Mr. Etheridge was compelled to wait the will and pleasure of the firm; and, utterly thrown out in all his arrangements, he had to ask a manufacturer in the country with whom he did business to renew an acceptance he had given him three months previously.

It was for a large amount, and the other had paid it away.

"I cannot get it back," he wrote; "but, as it would not suit me at all to have it returned on my hands, I must help you to meet it. How much can you do?"

Very truthfully, Mr. Etheridge answered that he could do next to nothing. He told Mr. Olleroyd about the order, and the firm, and the chief clerk, and at length Mr. Olleroyd agreed to "see him through it."

Of the difficulties which that gentleman encountered in his searches after money, this story need not speak.

As he said, the affair had not proved easy, and he was, perhaps,

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a little irritable and somewhat out of temper when he dispatched the letter with which Black Monday opened for Mr. Etheridge.

After all waiting three hours for any one, more particularly "one" on whose will and pleasure it depends whether money shall or shall not be placed to a man's credit, is not soothing to the nervous system; and Mr. Olleroyd on that particular Saturday night previous to Mr. Etheridge's visit to Cricklewood undoubtedly was "put out."

With Monday, however, came an evident improvement, for two hours after he reached his office this telegram was handed to Mr. Etheridge.

"From Olleroyd, Hisdon.
"To Mr. Etheridge, 147, Martin's Lane,
"Cannon Street, London.

"Arranged satisfactorily. Manager troublesome, but finally consented to telegraph to London. You will find amount to your credit at Bank."

Mr. Etheridge read this twice over, then he drew a long breath, as one who has been running a race and stops at length for a minute's rest.

He had felt quite certain, always quite certain, that for his own credit's sake Mr. Olleroyd would help him to the fullest extent; but still, as I have before indicated, the delays and impediments, and procrastinations of business take a great deal out of a man, and Mr. Edward Etheridge felt a great deal had been taken out of him.

After writing a few words of thankful acknowledgment, he put on his hat and went round to the bank, where he asked to see the manager, who without waiting to hear his business said:

"Good morning, Mr. Etheridge. Acceptance of yours presented here this morning. Suppose you have come round about it."

"Yes; I came to inquire if you had received a telegram from the Royal Bank, Hisdon, concerning money paid in to my credit there."

"No; if there had been we should have received advice in regular course, not by telegram."

"It was only paid in this morning."

"Then we shall hear to-morrow morning."

"You will certainly hear to-day."

"We never telegraph."

"Pardon me. The manager has promised to telegraph."

"Most irregular proceeding—not to be tolerated. Tom, Dick, and Harry will be sending telegrams to us from all over the country—money paid into Harry's account, and so forth."

Mr. Etheridge tried to laugh at the great man's wit. Those whose authority is highest and briefest like the sound of their own *mots* best.

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"As a jest that is very good," he said: "but we all know bankers are not to be hoodwinked so easily. Of course the Royal telegraphs to you sometimes, and equally, of course, you have knowledge of some cipher in order to preclude the possibility of fraud."

Instantly the manager stiffened. Mr. Etheridge's had always been a very poor account, so poor that it was really impertinent of him to speak freely in the presence chamber.

"I have had no telegram from Hisdon," he said, "and I must decline to discuss details which concern exclusively *us*. I may add that I do not consider it likely there will be a telegram."

"I shall look in again in an hour's time at any rate," observed Mr. Etheridge, still unabashed, and the manager answered, "Very well."

Then began the old performance over again. At the expiration of an hour the manager was out. The sub knew nothing about the matter. Mr. Etheridge had better call in after luncheon.

When Mr. Etheridge did so the manager had been in, but went off to the West in a hurry. No one had heard anything of a telegram, and most certainly nothing had been placed to Mr. Etheridge's credit; and so matters went on until Mr. Etheridge's unspoken question began to be negatived by a mere shake of the head. The business day was well-nigh over, and still the manager remained absent.

At length, just upon four o'clock, the great man returned.

"I have not heard anything of the telegram," he said, "but I will inquire. Jones (the clerk who appeared in answer to his summons), ascertain if there has been a message from the Royal Bank at Hisdon to-day. Won't you sit down, Mr. Etheridge."

Mr. Etheridge sat down. In the course of his business career he had passed many a *mauvais quart d'heure* in the manager's room; but he never underwent such sickening suspense as the while Jones was absent, and Mr. Philbrook engaged in turning over various papers that lay crowding his table.

After a time Jones returned, and, saying no trace could be discovered of any telegram, laid a slip on which was some writing under the eyes of his principal.

Mr. Etheridge rose.

"Did you say there was *no* message?" he asked the clerk; and even to his own ears his voice sounded strange and unnatural, as he put the question.

"None," said Mr. Philbrook, answering for him; "but this bill has been again presented. It is for a very large amount."

"Yes; but have you looked—are you sure there has been no telegram from Hisdon?" and, in his despair, he again addressed the subordinate instead of the chief.

"*I* told you, sir, there was no advice of any kind," said Mr. Philbrook; "and now pray give me your attention for a moment.

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What are you going to do about this?" and with his august hand he struck the slip of paper on which were traced particulars of that unlucky acceptance.

"I shall meet it with the money which has been paid in to my credit at Hisdon."

"There has been no money paid into your credit at Hisdon, sir."

Mr. Etheridge's face flushed. Time was when had any man contradicted him so flatly, so rudely, and so insolently he would have knocked him down; but a few years in the City, a few years experience of employers, of great firms, of fidgety customers, of impatient creditors, of dilatory debtors, of small men wielding great authority, of managers, of directors, of discounters, has a tendency to cool the blood, and, though the old Adam was not dead in Edward Etheridge, still, he had learnt something of that patient subservience which is at once the necessity and the curse of traders who are struggling to make their way.

"If money has been paid into your credit at Hisdon why have we not been advised of it?" continued Mr. Philbrook.

"That I am really unable to tell you. I wish I could. All I know is that in a letter received from my correspondent this morning he said the money would be placed to my credit; and, in a telegram sent off at half-past ten, he said it had been placed to my credit."

"Have you got them about you?"

"I beg your pardon. I do not quite——"

"Are you turning idiot? That letter and telegram," said Mr. Philbrook, in a tone as if he were addressing someone deaf or very far distant.

Perhaps he was not altogether wrong. Mr. Etheridge's wits did not at that moment seem to be particularly close at hand.

"No," he answered, referring to Mr. Olleroyd's communications rather than the state of his own mind, "they are at the office."

"Go and fetch them."

For once Mr. Etheridge's business faculty played him false. He thought Mr. Philbrook meant if he saw everything was right to allow him to overdraw, but he never was more mistaken.

In the very wantonness of power, in a spirit of the idlest, and most mechanical curiosity that gentleman desired to know the ins and outs of Mr. Etheridge's affairs. He had never been able quite to understand that individual, either the man himself or his affairs, and though he did not care whether ever or never the money were forthcoming, still he thought it as well to make himself as much *au fait* with the transaction as possible.

"Who is this Olleroyd?" he asked, as he ran his eyes over the correspondence.

Mr. Etheridge told him.

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"For what consideration did you give him your acceptance?"

Mr. Etheridge told him that also.

"Have you sent him down a final acceptance?"

Mr. Etheridge said he had not.

"You are quite sure?"

"Quite sure;" and the angry colour again mounted to his temples.

"Well," asked Mr. Philbrook, "what are you going to do? I have sent back the bill."

"What do you think I had better do?"

"Bring me the money and I will send round for it."

"I cannot get the money, I have been depending on this account from Hisdon."

"Then of course the thing must take its course."

"Will you let me overdraw the amount; I am perfectly certain you will have advice from The Royal in the morning."

"And I am perfectly certain The Royal has refused to place the amount to your credit; you see you are both evidently needy men."

"Olleroyd is not."

"Then why did he not send you up the cash?"

There was a pause.

"Will you telegraph to Hisdon?" asked Mr. Etheridge.

"I will not."

"Will you tell me why?"

"I do not see that I am bound to give you my reasons; but to put the case in a nutshell, I am not inclined to be made a fool of."

"You imagine I have been trying to fool you?"

"Well, to be perfectly candid, yes, I do."

"Then, to be perfectly candid also, I do not wonder at your being suspicious," said Mr. Etheridge, rising and taking his hat. "The man who could be taken in to the tune of one hundred and fifty thousand by such a self-evident swindler as Cossett has a right to be careful and cautious for ever after, even in his dealings with honest people."

"What do you mean, sir?"

"What I say: no more, no less."

"Mr. Etheridge, I have had quite enough of your insolence, and—and—your independence. I am here to look after the interests of the shareholders——"

"That is quite true; but you did not look after them when Cossett was——"

"And not to submit to the intolerable impertinence of a fellow whose account——"

"As I remarked, if after that experience, you did not err on the side of over-caution it would be strange indeed."

Although the conversation had arrived at a point when it

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resembled a catch, the tones of both performers were quiet if not polite. Suddenly, however, Mr. Philbrook broke out:

"I said, sir, I was here to look after the interests of the shareholders; but no board of directors could expect me to put up with the insolence of a fellow who has never had a couple of hundred to his credit for a week since he opened his account. Here, Jones! Jones!"

"Yes, sir!"

"Have Mr. Etheridge's account balanced at once. He is going to close it."

Edward Etheridge took one step forward over the carpet, with set teeth and clenched fist, meaning simply to knock the speaker down.

Then he thought better of it (God help us! how many there are in the City who every day and hour are compelled to think better about resenting taunts their poverty has induced); and, turning on his heel without a word of leavetaking, he left the manager's room, and, walking over the bank, waited with such patience as a desperate man might for his account to be made up and closed.

And still the promised telegram never arrived, and the bill was sent back; and a man—the same man who had been so happy the previous night—paced homeward to his lodgings, wretched and perplexed.

He had telegraphed to Mr. Olleroyd, and received no answer. He telegraphed again, entreating an explanation by post; and then, feeling nothing more was to be done in the City that night, locked up and went home.

Next morning, among the letters lying on Mr. Philbrook's table when he got to business, was one from the Royal Bank, Hisdon, stating that on the previous day they had advised, by telegraph, the amount mentioned by Mr. Etheridge.

With another day had come wisdom, and Mr. Philbrook was not quite satisfied as to the prudence of gratuitously making an enemy even of so insignificant a fellow as Etheridge.

"At all events, he does not seem to have been misleading me," considered the manager; "and perhaps I was hasty. That affair of Bellington's had put me out confoundedly; and then, he was aggravating. By-the-bye, how did he know all about Cossett's matter? Jones! Is Dettel in?"

"Yes, sir."

"Tell him to go to Mr. Etheridge's office, and ask him to step round."

When, half an hour later, Mr. Philbrook inquired if Dettel had returned, the answer was,

"Yes, sir; but Mr. Etheridge left his office at ten o'clock to catch the express for Hisdon."

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Chapter III.

"I WANT to speak to you. I am laid up with gout. Can you come here this evening. Dinner at seven.—S.B."

This note was waiting Mr. Etheridge's return to his office one evening, some ten days after his visit to Hisdon; and, though all the world, for him, had changed since he had walked down the Cricklewood road, happy—still, judge if the man with whom things had gone so adversely would be likely to hesitate about accepting the invitation.

Dinner at seven he could not manage, but coffee to follow was just within his grasp; so he hurried home to his lodgings, changed his dress, and proceeded to Mr. Bolton's little box.

"Well, you must be very much in earnest," was the speech with which that gentleman greeted him. "Come along. You shall have your coffee, and Rosie, presently; but just now, I and claret want two words with you." And Mr. Bolton, with no sign of gout about him, wrung Mr. Etheridge's hand, and closed the door of the dining-room upon their *tête-à-tête*.

"Will you smoke?" asked Mr. Bolton; and, his guest agreeing, both men lit cigars.

"I am glad to see you are so much better," said Mr. Etheridge, as a beginning.

"Thank you; physically I am well enough," answered Mr. Bolton, stretching out his legs as far as legs could go. "Of course, I worded my message cautiously, as otherwise anyone who happened to see it might have wondered why I wanted you to come here."

There was a calm superiority about this remark which might have surprised Mr. Etheridge a week previously, but which now only seemed right and natural.

"You have still, I believe, that fancy in your head about being fond of Rosie?"

"It is no fancy."

"And Rosie, I imagine, believes she is fond of you?"

"God bless her!" whispered Mr. Etheridge.

"Well, suppose, then, that you marry her."

"I am afraid——"

"That you do not quite grasp my meaning? *That* is quite possible," said Mr. Bolton with a sneer. "To begin again. You are fond of Rosie?"

"Fond!"

"Well, are you willing to marry her or not?"

"Willing!"

"For Heaven's sake don't go on repeating my words. Will you marry her?"

"Of course I will, only too gladly."

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"When?"

"To-morrow if she would have me—only that I am a ruined man."

"A matter of no consequence, however, you will right yourself ere long. So you engage to lodge, board, and clothe a young person whom you have seen twenty times at most—shall we say twenty?"

"Nearer fifty," amended the suitor.

"For the remainder of her natural life. Really it seems to me I am taking a base advantage of you, sir. I must tell you that Rosie has no fortune, and, so far as I can judge at present, never will have any."

"All the better, if I can only make enough for both."

"Finely said. Now, that is the sort of thing that would tell on the stage—bring down the house, eh? Don't be offended, I daresay you mean it all. There was a time when I might have meant it myself."

"I do mean it. Your daughter is what I care for and not your money."

"Which is fortunate, as it happens. I have not got any. You see before you," proceeded Mr. Bolton, speaking, as it seemed, with a certain relish, "a ruined man. I have been expecting a crash for some time, and now it is at hand. To-morrow I cross the silver streak. Where I may go afterwards is uncertain. I can't take Rosie with me, and I should like to know she had a husband to take care of her. I wish to be perfectly frank with you. Had matters turned out as I expected I should have expected Rosie to make a good match; as it is she must marry what she can get. If, as I hope, things go well with me in the future—I have many plans—you may be sure I shall not forget my daughter's husband; if they do not, why, you must trust to your own cleverness."

"I have a little money by me, and out of it I can spare you a couple of hundred. That will see you through the honeymoon; and after that something may turn up. Now you know the best and the worst. Are you still in the same mind? I won't hold you to your bargain if you want to cry off."

Right well Mr. Bolton knew the nature of the man he was addressing. If anything could have made Rosie dearer to him it was the idea of her lonely helplessness.

"Cry off!" he repeated indignantly. "Can I, may I, see Rosie myself? I have never asked her yet to be my wife. I think she will not say 'No;' but still——"

"I do not wish to deprive either of you of any of your privileges," said Mr. Bolton. "Do the lovemaking yourself, but leave the business arrangements to me. Till we are away from here I do not wish Rosie to know she can never return to her old home. Upon principle, I avoid tears, scenes, and leave-takings. To-night

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I shall take her to her aunt, who lives near Southampton; and when you and she have arranged everything, I propose, if you do not delay matters too long, running over to give her away. There; you have my programme in a sentence. Now you can go to her."

Chapter IV.

"Etheridge's paper has been dishonoured! Etheridge's bill has been returned!"

Sentences of awful omen in the City. Not in a moment is all the evil wrought. A man's credit is as a woman's character. Once let a whisper be breathed to the disparagement of either, and the human being does not live who may tell when and where the scandal may break out afresh.

London is great enough—England is large enough, one might have thought, for a man damaged in this quarter to be able to restore his character in that; but practical experience proves that, whilst it takes years to build up a reputation, it requires only a second to destroy the carefully-reared edifice. A second. Poh! —a breath, and the card castle a man has built in the sweat of his brow, with the labour of his hands, is level with the dust.

So Edward Etheridge found, at all events. He had climbed a good way up the ladder, and now the ladder was knocked from under his feet. He had thought the game was in his own hands, and, behold! the cards had all to be dealt over again, and the contest begun *de novo*—with this difference, that in the mercantile world there was a cross opposite his name, which meant, as the reader chose to take the hint, "Caution!" or "Danger!"

Then the acceptance had been taken up—the bill eventually paid; but what did all that signify. For one day the man had failed to meet his engagements, and that fact let in a flood of light upon his position.

The business in which he had achieved a certain measure of success chanced to be one that had its proud, captivating, and very many adventurous spirits, and the consequence was that the few people who were engaged in it knew more about the affairs of their fellows than is usual.

At all events, Mr. Etheridge soon discovered that the state of his affairs was pretty freely canvassed. Gradually, but surely, he found his credit going. Sellers refused his acceptances, and refused parting with their goods unless his orders were accompanied with cash. Mr. Olleroyd, who had also suffered some annoyance through the transaction, told Mr. Etheridge distinctly he did not care to have any further dealings with him.

"I would not for five times the amount have had the bill returned," he said; "and *it must* have been through some bad management on your part the mishap occurred."

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Further, the folly of a man marrying Sam Bolton's daughter at the very time Mr. Sam Bolton's creditors were anxiously inquiring as to his whereabouts was discussed, with charitable guesses that he had been either an accomplice or a dupe.

The outside world knew nothing of Rosie as Rosie; they only knew of her as the only child of Sam Bolton, a swindling bankrupt, who had levanted, owing Heaven knows how much money, and leaving no appreciable assets behind. His Jersey place was mortgaged to its full value; so was the cottage: so were his shares and other securities. Nothing to speak of remained. Though his furniture and horses fetched good prices, still all that they realised proved but a drop in the ocean of his liabilities.

There was no making head against it at all; there would have been no making head, even if Rosie had been as economical as she was extravagant.

Simple tastes are not always cheap; and, ere long, Edward Etheridge found the little lady who had been so fond of bantams could make money spin just as fast as anyone of her more sophisticated sisters.

It is a talent of her beau sire, and at first Mr. Etheridge did not care to check its development in his wife. He dreaded making his girl-bride feel the change from the free and royal, if not overhonest, expenditure of her pretty home, and she had the idea, held by many other women who are older and who should be wiser, that a man "in the City" has but to wish for money in order to have it.

Perplexed and disheartened, her husband toiled on. Day by day he fought the unequal battle, unassisted, unencouraged. At home he might have been sufficiently happy (for Rosie had the sweetest and sunniest of tempers, and, if the servants were tiresome and the dinners badly cooked, Rosie herself always looked trim and pretty, and greeted him with smiles) had it not been for the haunting conviction that he should not long be able to preserve the nest he had provided for his darling intact.

Rude hands would tear it to pieces, and he was powerless to interfere.

To a strong man this feeling of helplessness to protect those he would die to defend is more trying than almost any other sorrow which can befall him, and madly, desperately, Edward Etheridge worked to defer the day he feared he could not avert.

Looking back afterwards at the prolonged struggle, he wondered he had held out so long—marvelled how he had borne the daily martyrdom, the night-long agony—the business hours full of annoyances, rebuffs, and disappointments—the night watches, when he awoke from uneasy sleep to rehearse the troubles of the coming day.

"What will be the end of it?" was the question he at first

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was wont to put to himself; but it at last came to "When will it end?"

He would not take the initiative himself, he would not, even by an hour, anticipate the period of his business death; but he knew the finish could not be very far off—already, in imagination, he beheld his name in the *Gazette*, the auctioneer's bills in the windows of the home he had made for her, the furniture he had somehow managed to purchase sold to the highest bidder, Rosie in poor lodgings, himself a clerk, if so fortunate as to obtain a situation.

He was waiting for all this to come to pass, when one day, when he was trying to reason with an impatient creditor, a curious phenomenon occurred.

All in a moment, even while the end of a sentence hung upon his lips, the ceiling seemed to touch the floor and the floor the ceiling; then everything began to race round and round before his eyes—the desk, the office stool, his visitor, the shelves filled with goodly ledgers, all seemed flying one after the other through space. The whole delusion did not last more than a few seconds. Whilst his creditor waited for the words still muttered, the fantasy was over, and he lying senseless, with a thick darkness shrouding all his faculties, on the ground.

Strangers took him home—took him back to the young wife who had never before even known the meaning of the word trouble; strangers carried him upstairs and laid him on his bed, and sent for doctors, and did what they could to soften the first violence of so awful a blow; and then they went away, leaving the two in their helpless loneliness together.

Whilst he lay there during the days and weeks that followed, the worst he had been anticipating for so long happened.

The bills were put up—the furniture was on view—the auctioneer's people came and went—the various lots were knocked down and cleared away; but all these things seemed unimportant trifles in Rosie's eyes. To her there was but one evil—that her husband should die; one good—that he should live.

She might not be clever—she might have been foolish—but she was fond; and if only it pleased God to give him back to her, she felt she would be content to walk out into the wide world with him, her hand clasped by his hand, beggars two together.

But the strain had been too long continued—the brain-pressure too great for the doctors to give hope of recovery.

It was the evening of the day after the auction. All the lots had been taken away; the servants were gone; the house, with the exception of the bed the sick man lay on, a couple of common chairs, a small table, and a few most needful kitchen utensils, was perfectly bare of furniture. To the tramping of feet, to the noise of voices, to the pulling about of tables and wardrobes, the taking down of mirrors and chandeliers, and the rest of the hub-

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bub which drove Rosie almost distracted, there had succeeded an utter silence—a silence as of death; a pin falling would have been heard in the stillness, as the doctor, standing by the bedside, felt his patient's pulse, and looked long and critically at his face.

"If he has any friends," he said at last, softly, "you ought to write to them."

That was all; but she understood.

"I will post the letter for you," the doctor added, knowing she had no one with her in the house.

Upon such a subject much could not be said; so Rosie, tears blinding her, traced a few lines to her aunt; and then, after a minute's consideration, wrote a little note, which she addressed to

"WARREN ETHERIDGE, ESQ.,
"Kingsmead,
"Queensfield, ——shire."

"I wish you would let me send in a nurse," said the doctor, as he took the letters from her; but Rosie shook her head.

"I would rather be alone," she answered; and so he left her.

* * * * *

"I think he may pull through now." It was the same doctor who spoke—the same doctor, standing in the same room a week later.

He was again feeling his patient's pulse—again looked critically at his face. But this time, instead of speaking to Mrs. Etheridge, he was speaking to an elderly gentleman who stood on the opposite side of the bed holding Rosie's hand in his.

There was a stirring of consciousness in the man who had been stricken down so suddenly and so grievously, but as he struggled back to life his broken murmurs bore no reference to the dreary struggles of his manhood, but to the far-off days when he was a boy, roaming over the lands of Kingsmead, which one day, as his lesson went, must be his.

And in truth the City life was over; and the scenes and the sounds, and the associations of the brighter past were environing him.

Flowers from the remembered conservatories, fruit from the hothouses down by the south wall, wines from the cool, deep cellars, game from the well-stocked preserves; these things were now for the man who had been, as the doctor wrote, dying, and in want of the common necessaries of life.

And there were things better than food for the body, kindly words, warm friendship, the reconciliation of relations foolishly estranged, tones that had not sounded in his ears for many a weary day. It was through dreamland he came back from the valley of the shadow, but a dreamland from which he only passed into a happier reality than his manhood had ever known.

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"He will never be able to bear the excitement of business again," remarked the doctor one day to Mr. Warren Etheridge.

"Poor fellow, he ought never to have gone into it. We must see what we can do for him. Would an agency suit him, do you think, doctor? He might come and manage my property for me. Live in the country, ride about, how would that do?"

"It would make a new man of him," said the doctor.

"And you, my dear, how should you like an arrangement of the kind?"

Rosie took the old man's hand and kissed it. What she replied in words was not very connected or very clear; but somehow Edward Etheridge's uncle made out that his pretty little niece would live anywhere on anything providing only she was with Ned, and that Ned was well and happy.

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SIR RALPH OF BEOLEY.

A LEGEND OF BOSWORTH FIELD.

Sir Ralph of Beoley is haggard and pale,
And fast he spurs down the Arrow Vale.
He rides amain o'er the meadow lands,
To where the rich Minster of Bordesley stands.

Before the Abbot he bends the knee,
Who much is surprised the knight to see—
To see him so haggard and wan withal,
And, indeed, to see him there at all.

For Sir Ralph, as the Abbot is well aware,
Is little addicted to penance or prayer;
And better loves rapine, and riot, and jest,
Than to humble himself to a priest's behest.

Yet now right humbly he bends the knee,
And with faltering voice his suit makes he:
"Oh list, Lord Abbot, in mercy hear,
My heart is heavy with sorrow and fear.

"I have gathered my spears, I am bound to ride
To stand in my place by King Richard's side—
Though it recks not me if he win or yield,
For ride shall I never from Bosworth Field.

"For thrice last night in my slumbers came
A grisly dream, that was ever the same;
A slaughtered man I seemed to be,
And fiends made mirth as they seized on me.

"Oh, I have done such deeds of sin
I know they are ready my soul to win.
Save Holy Church be my shield and stay,
Body and bone they will bear me away.

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"I have willed to your Abbey, for evermore,
Corn-land, and meadow, and golden store;
And I crave that to-morrow, from morn till eve,
Your choir may sing for my soul's reprieve.

"That to-morrow, from morn till eve, alway,
Your bells may ring, and your monks may pray;
That the Powers of the Air that are waiting for me
May be foiled by your care, and may leave me and flee."

"My son," said the Abbot, "to fear forbear;
Our brotherhood for thy soul shall care."
So Sir Ralph with his spears his way has ta'en,
To stand in his place on Bosworth Plain.

The Abbot mused, "If this godless knight
Fall, as he fears, in the coming fight,
We need not greatly grieve to hear,
We have lost an ill neighbour, and gained good gear."

With morn the Abbot would hunting be,
Small thought to the soul of Sir Ralph gave he;
Nor bell did he bid to ring that day,
Save those that swung at his bridle gay;

Nor chant, save the stave of a hunting song,
That he hummed to himself as he rode along;
Nor prayer, that day, save a hasty grace,
Above the fat venison from Feckenham Chase.

That night, their Abbey walls within,
The merry monks made wassail and din,
And lustily sang as they passed the bowl—
But it was not for Ralph of Beoley's soul.

Revel they held till the night grew late,
When a horseman rode to the convent gate.
And the drowsy porter at last was 'ware
How a knight in the arms of Sir Ralph sat there.

Faintly he spake, "I am wounded sore,
Bear me within the convent door."
They lifted him down from his steed so tall,
And they bear him into the guestenhall.

Small joy was the Abbot's to hear that the knight
Had returned with life from the field of the fight;
Yet forth he hastened to meet his guest,
And greeted him kindly as seemed to him best.

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"Welcome to me, Sir Ralph, again!
Rightly I deemed thy fears were vain,
For needs our prayers for thee this day
Must shield thee from harm in the battle fray.
And how went the fight: did Richmond yield;
What tidings bring'st thou from Bosworth Field?"

"Full many a knight, by this dinted shield,
Is stark in the furrows of Bosworth Field;
His sword in his hand, and his crown on his head,
Plantagenet lies there—a King of the Dead.

"The White Rose has fallen, and its leaves so fair,
Are trampled to earth, or are scattered to air;
And fast flee the friends of King Richard away,
For Richmond is after to harry and slay.

"Hide me, Sir Priest, in Bordesley pile,
Lest I be ta'en of that traitor vile.
Shield me from harm this night, I pray,
As your prayers have preserved me from harm this day."

The Abbot turned him a little aside,
The smile that rose to his lips to hide:
"As to-day by our prayers we have saved thee from ill,
Will we hide thee, and heal thee, and care for thee still."

The iron glove of the knight he pressed:
"Thou art wounded and weary, and fain wouldest rest.
Our wisest brother shall tend thy bed
With salve and with posset, Sir Ralph," he said.

But he muttered apart, "Please the saints we may find
That his wounds are deep, and of mortal kind;
For, an he recover, his hiding here
May come to Harry of Richmond's ear.

"And for one good deed—a shame on the day!
The Church's coffers may have to pay.
Whilst, an he but have the grace to die
His lands and his gold we may gain thereby.

"Our leech, Brother Peter, would scarce refuse
The privilege of a leech to use
Of assisting nature as need may be—
I'll quietly drop him a hint," thought he.

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Out laughed Sir Ralph, with a loud reply—
He spake not like one at point to die—
"To me of salve nor of posset tell:
My wounds already feel wondrous well.
Ere even of chamber or bed I think
A horn with your merry monks I'd drink."

He sat to the board in his clinking mail,
He pledged the monks in their wine and ale;
And such draughts 'twixt the bars of his helmet went
As filled them with envy and wonderment.

But they noted not how like fierce red stars
His eyes gleamed forth through those helmet bars;
Nor saw when his lips the beaker kissed
How the wine as it laved them bubbled and hissed,
And seemed from their touch to seethe and smoke
As from iron made hot for the anvil stroke;

Nor saw how the lights burned blue and dim
When they pledged him deeply, or chorussed with him
Whilst he chanted carols unmeet for the ears
Of a brotherhood of holy freres.

Since bold de Beaumont, in Stephen's days,
The Abbey of Bordesley first let raise
Had there never been in its walls, I wis,
Such a shocking and scandalous revel as this.

To see it the Abbot was nigh distraught.
"To his lodgings," said he, "let Sir Ralph be brought."
But long it was ere the guest could be
Allured from his jovial company.

The Prior would see the knight unarm,
But he fled from the chamber in haste and alarm.
"'Tis surely a fiend!" And the Abbot replied
That Sir Ralph was never deemed aught beside.

"Of his harness he will not be eased a whit—
He affirmeth he sleepeth the better in it!
And he danceth his raiment of iron within
Till the cloisters clang to the shameless din.
Perchance I have erred, yet meseemed that my nose
Found an odour of sulphur exhale from his clothes."

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"Pish, pish!" quoth the Abbot, "thy prating cease.
Lock the door of the chamber, and leave him in peace.
If he will, in his armour his sleep let him take—
Please the Saints, it may smother him ere he awake!"

The short night sped, and the morning's gleam
Flashed o'er the Vale, and the Arrow stream;
And the Prior of Bordesley went with his key
To set his troublesome inmate free.

Vainly he sought the chamber round—
No Knight of Beoley was to be found—
No guest was in cloister or guestenhall,
And steed was there none in the Abbey stall!

Since stout de Beaumont, that valiant peer,
The Abbey of Bordesley first let rear,
Never a night in its walls was seen
Of marvels so strange as that night had been.

But all that night, where over the slain
The wan moon glimmered on Bosworth Plain,
All that night long, in the moonlight dim,
Sir Ralph of Beoley lay stark and grim!

F. SCARLETT POTTER.

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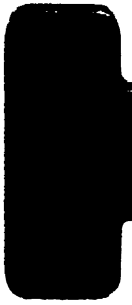

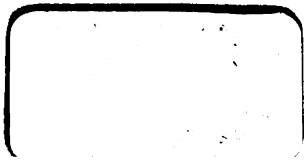

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